





Detail of the wedding feast of Sir Henry Unton (1557?-1596), from the original, by an unknown artist, in the National Portrait Gallery, London. See page 487.

SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY

VOLUME IV

OCTOBER 1953

NUMBER 4

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SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY is published in January, April, July, and October in New York City by the Shakespeare Association of America, Inc., 322 East 57th Street, New York, New York. Membership in the Association includes the annual subscription to the QUARTERLY, and the subscription rate is \$5.00 a year, postpaid, with single copies available at one dollar and fifty cents. SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY is entered as second-class matter at the New York City Post Office. Applications for membership in the Association and all business communications and changes of address should be sent to Mr. John Fleming, Secretary-Treasurer, 322 East 57th Street, New York City. Articles intended for publication should be addressed to Dr. James G. McManaway, Editor, The Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington 3, D. C.

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Action and Symbol in *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest*

HAROLD S. WILSON



If we compare the dramatic methods of *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest* with reference to the directing roles that their two dukes play—Vincentio of Vienna and Prospero of Milan and the Magic Island—we may observe a notable difference in their procedures. Both of them seem to supervise and control the action of their respective plays. But whereas Prospero takes us immediately into his confidence and explains his purpose as he goes along, Duke Vincentio never explicitly states his purpose in *Measure for Measure* and we are left to deduce it from the course and outcome of the action. The result has been that Prospero's aims and methods have puzzled no one;¹ but the reticence of Duke Vincentio has given rise to widespread complaint, if not misunderstanding as well, and *Measure for Measure* accordingly has often been thought to present a "problem" by reason of its doubtful morality, its discordant techniques, or both. The purpose of this paper is to argue that the technique of *Measure for Measure* is logical and consistent, and to support this opinion by comparing *Measure for Measure* with *The Tempest*. The two plays have much in common, and the one may be used to shed light upon the other.

Critical opinions concerning *Measure for Measure* may be classified, roughly, in four categories. The hostile view of the play, characteristic of romantic criticism in the nineteenth century, is typified in Coleridge's comment: "The pardon and marriage of Angelo not merely baffles the strong indignant claim of justice (for cruelty, with lust and damnable baseness, cannot be forgiven, because we cannot conceive them as being morally repented of) but it is likewise degrading to the character of women";² and this view has been associated, in more recent times, with the theory that *Measure for Measure*, like the other "dark" comedies and *Timon of Athens*, reflects Shakespeare's disillusionment and gloomy despair of human virtue during the time he was writing his great tragedies, while he was "in the depths."³ At the opposite pole is the view of G. Wilson Knight and

¹ The play, of course, has afforded plenty of complexity to the commentators who have explored the analogies it has suggested to their ingenious fancies—analogy with Shakespeare's own career, with political events of the reign of James, even with the initiation rites of primitive cultures. With these and kindred speculations we shall not here be concerned.

² *Coleridge's Shakespeare Criticism*, ed. T. M. Raylor (London, 1930), I, 113-114.

³ The origins and development of this view have been set forth at length in the two British Academy Shakespeare Lectures of C. J. Sisson ("The Mythical Sorrows of Shakespeare," 1934) and R. W. Chambers ("The Jacobean Shakespeare and *Measure for Measure*," 1937).

others that *Measure for Measure* deals with the forgiveness of sin in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.⁴

Distinguishable from these two opposing schools of interpretation are two groups of commentators who have been mainly concerned to criticize the dramatic technique of the play. It has been said that the play contains an unassimilated mixture of "realism" and implausible convention,⁵ or that it reflects an uncoordinated change in the author's purpose and point of view.⁶ The technique of the play has likewise found defenders;⁷ but the issue remains open to further argument.

The main difficulty about *Measure for Measure* seems to arise in the following way. In the first act we learn that the Duke is troubled about the corrupt state of Vienna (which his lenient rule has hitherto condoned against his will, and which is illustrated for us in I.ii, in the persons of Lucio, Mistress Overdone, and Claudio), and that he has hit upon the expedient of entrusting reform to Lord Angelo, whose inflexible virtue, he hopes, may correct the abuses without reflecting an inconsistent harshness in his own policy. Some doubts about Angelo's reliability, however, have prompted the Duke to remain in the guise of a friar as a secret witness of Angelo's rule. From this point (I.iii) we know that the disguised Duke is above all the man to watch, but we may well suppose that his concern is simply for moral reform in Vienna through a stronger exertion of just authority.

In act II, our attention is concentrated upon the villainy of Angelo, as he tries to seduce Isabella in exchange for her brother's pardon. The disguised Duke learns of Angelo's hypocrisy as he visits her brother Claudio in prison, and we begin to long for him to intervene. Instead, however, he arranges the substitution of Mariana for Isabella in the assignation with Angelo and at the same time deceives Claudio concerning Angelo's motives by pretending to know from the confessional that Angelo's proposal to Isabel is but to test her; thus he prepares Claudio to expect death in a spirit of humble submission (III.i).

We observe the effect of the Duke's designs upon Claudio, but at the same time we cannot help observing the Duke's duplicity; and no hint is given of what his ultimate purpose may be. If we have any doubts about the Duke's

⁴ G. Wilson Knight, "Measure for Measure and the Gospels," in *The Wheel of Fire* (London, 1930), pp. 80-106; R. W. Chambers, as cited in the preceding note; R. W. Battenhouse, "Measure for Measure and Christian Doctrine of the Atonement," *PMLA*, LXI (1946), 1029-59; Elizabeth M. Pope, "The Renaissance Background of Measure for Measure," *Shakespeare Survey*, 2 (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 66-82.

⁵ W. W. Lawrence, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (New York, 1931), pp. 78-121; Virgil Whitaker, "Philosophy and Romance in Shakespeare's 'Problem' Comedies," *The Seventeenth Century* (Stanford, Cal., 1951), pp. 339-354.

⁶ O. J. Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire* (London, 1943); see also his *Comicall Satyre and Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida* (San Marino, Cal., 1938); E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (Toronto, 1949); Murray Kreiger, "Measure for Measure and Elizabethan Comedy," *PMLA*, LVI (1951), 775-784. The inference from these adverse criticisms of the play's technique is really in support of the view of the first group of commentators here distinguished, for the ethical unsatisfactoriness of the play may be related to its supposed technical shortcomings.

⁷ This is the implication of M. C. Bradbrook, "Authority, Truth, and Justice in Measure for Measure," *Review of English Studies*, XVII (1941), 385-399, who sees the play as a sustained allegory in dramatic form. See, more particularly, Francis Fergusson, "Philosophy and Theatre in Measure for Measure," *The Kenyon Review*, XIV (1952), 103-120, where it is argued that the play is to be understood "both as philosophy and as poetry-of-the-theatre, but that the two are not separate, or merely mechanically combined, but two cognate modes of presenting a single underlying vision of man in society" (p. 104).

behavior, these are strengthened in the following encounter with Lucio, whose impudent aspersions upon the Duke's character leave the bogus friar comically at a loss to answer him; and the Duke's moralizing soliloquy at the end of act III but restores a balance of ambiguity with the moral earnestness of its rhymed sententiousness. Still, the only motive implied for the Duke's actions is justice:

Craft against vice I must apply.
 With Angelo tonight shall lie
 His old betrothed but despised;
 So disguise shall, by th' disguised,
 Pay with falseness false exacting,
 And perform an old contracting. (III.ii.291-296)⁸

This is a version of "measure for measure," but it tells us nothing of the retribution we naturally expect to overtake Angelo at the Duke's hands. If justice is his end, it is surely high time he intervened more decisively than this. Under Angelo's regime, the petty offenders are punished with a stern hand—Claudio, Pompey, Mistress Overdone—while licentiousness and evil, in the persons of Lucio and Angelo, have free sway.

Act IV skillfully sets the stage for the climax. The Duke presides at the meeting of Isabella and Mariana; Isabella's embarrassing interview with Angelo, in which she gives her feigned submission, is tactfully reported in a few words, and the arrangements between Isabella and Mariana take place off stage. The contrasting comedy of the following prison scenes, where Pompey becomes Abhorson's apprentice and Barnardine proves indifferent to the sentence of death, is in Shakespeare's best macabre vein. This passage shows us the ordinary workings of human justice, an ironical light upon the hypocritical pretensions of an Angelo; and the linking of these scenes with the story of Isabella and Angelo and Claudio has somewhat the same effect as the grave-diggers' scene linking the death of Ophelia with the return of Hamlet to Denmark. There is the same contrast of the comic with the deeply serious, and the same jesting with the theme of mortality.⁹

As the climax approaches, we expect Angelo's villainy to be unmasked, but we do not know how it is to be managed, any more than do Isabella and the others who act under the friar's instructions. He has deceived Isabella, cruelly, as it seems, about Claudio's fate, tempting her, too, with the prospect of revenge upon Angelo. Angelo himself has some misgivings:

Alack, when once our grace we have forgot,
 Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not! (IV.iv.35-36)

But he is far from penitent, and he is prepared to maintain his hypocrisy with his customary firmness. His colleague Escalus is merely bewildered at the Duke's

⁸ All references to the text of Shakespeare are taken from the *Complete Works*, ed. G. L. Kittredge (1936).

⁹ That Barnardine's execution should be deferred and his offences finally pardoned is no sentimental concession to the happy ending but a serious part of the doctrine of the play. How terrible a thing it seemed to Shakespeare's time that a man should die unrepentant, witnessed as late as Shirley's *The Wedding*, where the plot turns upon the idea that it is incredible that a man not utterly abandoned to evil should die with a lie upon his lips. An Iago or a Macbeth may defy heaven; but Barnardine is insensible in his villainy and hence the responsibility for sending him to eternal judgment rests with his earthly judges.

suddenly announced return. All of this heightens the mood of expectancy with which we await the outcome of the Duke's elaborate preparations, and the suspense we feel centers upon the Duke's relation to Angelo.

What immediately follows is a false climax. The Duke feigns to be completely persuaded of Angelo's good faith, and retires, leaving the helpless Isabel and Mariana to be arraigned before Angelo, and the absent friar to be traduced by Lucio. Even though we know the outcome of the play well, at a performance we cannot but be thrilled by the suspense of this moment. Then follow swiftly the return and accusation of the friar, his unmasking by Lucio and the consequent unmasking of Angelo, the vindication of Isabel and Mariana, and the confusion of Lucio. Still the final turning point is not reached. The Duke presses the charge of justice against the newly married Angelo:

The very mercy of the law cries out
Most audible, even from his proper tongue,
"An Angelo to Claudio! death for death!"
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and Measure still for Measure. (V.i.412-416)

Isabel provides the solution. We have seen the youthful sternness of her character in her scornful rejection of her brother's appeal to her to sacrifice herself for him. Now, as Mariana pleads with her to intercede for Angelo, we are able to appreciate the struggle it costs her to forgive an enemy; for, owing to the Duke's deception, she thinks her brother Claudio has been put to death on Angelo's order. The flimsiness of her excuse for Angelo is apparent:

My brother had but justice
In that he did the thing for which he died.
For Angelo,
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent,
And must be buried but as an intent
That perish'd by the way. Thoughts are no subjects,
Intents but merely thoughts. (V.i.453-59)

Dr. Johnson wrote of this appeal, "Women think ill of nothing that raises the credit of their beauty, and are ready, however virtuous, to pardon any act they think incited by their charms."¹⁰ Such an irony is not beyond Shakespeare's capacity, but it is not in keeping with the seriousness of this moving scene. It shows us a vital change in Isabel. Her newly awakened charity can find an excuse for Angelo where in fact there is none.

At this point, the suspense is relieved by the appearance of the living Claudio, as the last element of the Duke's design falls into place. The pattern of the whole action now stands revealed for the first time, in the general forgiveness of the ending, and we may at length see a firm consistency of purpose in all the Duke's proceedings. Claudio did wrong and was brought to repentance through expecting justice; instead, he received mercy. Angelo was brought to repent of his wrong-doing in the same way and with the same consequence. The unrepentant Barnardine and even the graceless Lucio share in the mercy, that they may yet find time to remember their sins. Isabel, once intent upon justice, is offered the choice between justice and mercy, and chooses mercy.

¹⁰ *Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. W. Raleigh (London, 1908), p. 80.

Finally, the ambiguous implication preserved in the title of the play stands fully revealed: the measure of justice that Angelo meted to Claudio is in turn meted to Angelo; but the grace that saved Claudio also saves Angelo.

This significant pattern is revealed cumulatively and held in some suspense until the very end, when everything falls into place as an effect of the culminating action; hence there can be no real explanatory comment from the Duke by way of preparation—according to the way the play is designed—and no one else is in a position to supply it. The Duke's purpose must remain something of an enigma till his final action of forgiveness makes it as explicit as it can be made. If Shakespeare had chosen to avoid the ambiguity of the Duke's role, he might have represented him as speaking, near the beginning of the play (and in suitable poetry, rather than this clumsy prose) somewhat to this effect: "I have long been troubled about the corrupt state of Vienna, and I know that my friend Angelo, for all his professed virtue, has shared in it to the extent, at least, of repudiating his betrothal. But I have never cared much simply about punishing offenders. This never does very much good. Any real improvement can come only through a change of heart. I have thought of an ingenious way of testing Angelo, and perhaps bringing about a change of heart in him and others. Watch how I set about it, and, no matter how dubious my conduct may seem, remember that my purpose throughout is to temper justice with mercy and to bring the proud and erring to repentance." But if the Duke had thus explained himself, the whole ensuing action would have been prejudged. Our sense of conflict would have been lessened. The Duke, to be sure, does not really control anyone's actions; on the contrary, he constantly prepares choices for others; but our reliance upon his revealed purposes would lessen the suspense and there would be virtually no surprise in the outcome. Thus all the author's skill goes to maintaining the suspense of the action through the Duke's reticence and the implied ambiguity of his motives and conduct, through the very ambiguity of the play's title, and the significance of the action is revealed through the recurrence of a single theme which builds a symbolic design. The method of *Measure for Measure* might thus be called "symbolic action"; that is, the theme of the play emerges out of the pattern of the action, as a conception and effect embodied in the action without the help of any anticipatory hint or clue.¹¹

The symbolic design of the play is likewise implicit in the contrasting interrelations of the main characters as seen through the developing action. Angelo, until the climax is reached, stands for justice as the world knows it; the Duke for justice tempered by mercy, the precedent for which is not human but divine; and he lightly hints at his true role, if we can read his riddle: "There is scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure, but security enough to make fellowships accurst. Much upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world. This news is old enough, yet it is every day's news" (III.ii.240-244). The Duke, likewise, is "one that, above all other strifes, contended especially to know himself" (III.ii.246-247); but Angelo has never known himself until he is

¹¹ In certain ways, the method much resembles that later adapted by Beaumont and Fletcher to more superficial ends in *Philaster*; see a paper by the present writer, "Philaster and *Cymbeline*," *English Institute Essays, 1951* (New York, 1952), pp. 146-167. The technique of surprise is, of course, familiar enough throughout the history of drama, or of narrative, for that matter; but the skill and subtlety of its use vary a great deal. In *Measure for Measure*, as is here suggested, Shakespeare provides a masterly example of this dramatic method.

forced to look upon his hypocrisy and acknowledge his errors through the Duke's accusation, and to understand the true status of the sinner through experiencing the forgiveness of Mariana, Isabella, and the Duke acting "like pow'r divine" (V.i.374).

The Angelo whose eyes are sealed to his own shortcomings, the Angelo of the opening of the play, is not altogether unlike Isabel in her narrow holiness and self-righteousness.¹² She preaches eloquently to Angelo, in her first interview with him (II.ii.27 ff.), about hating the sin but not the sinner, about forgiveness and mercy; but when it is a case of forgiving her brother Claudio for proposing to sacrifice her virtue to save his life (and Claudio is immediately penitent for the proposal), she storms at him like a virago:

O you beast!
O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!
Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?
Is't not a kind of incest to take life
From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?
Heaven shield my mother play'd my father fair!
For such a warped slip of wilderness
Ne'er issu'd from his blood. Take my defiance!
Die, perish! Might but my bending down
Reprise thee from thy fate, it should proceed.
I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,
No word to save thee. (III.i.136-147)

And she disdains Claudio's further pleading to be forgiven his moment of weakness, with virginal righteousness. But when the Duke proposes that Mariana should yield herself to Angelo and thus preserve Isabel's chastity, Isabel shows no scruples about submitting Mariana to the offence for which Claudio had suffered the rigor of the law, nor any regret at the memory of her harshness to her brother. It is a wonderful irony, too, that the virginal and self-righteous Isabel should first tempt the virginal and self-righteous Angelo to sin, and that by means of this provocation they should both be brought to participate in the experience of penitence, mercy, and forgiveness. In the end, Isabel is a wiser and finer woman, though scarcely the "thing enskied and sainted" of Lucio's famous tribute; but then, Lucio was hardly a qualified judge in these matters. The Duke, who estimates Isabel more sensibly, evidently proposes to marry her. And so skillful has he been in leading her to forgo self-righteousness and revenge and to prefer forgiveness, that we may hope well of their marriage; for the Duke has shown himself a wise and Christian ruler, and Isabel has learned the Christian virtue of charity.

The Duke has prompted the action from the beginning, and none of the other characters has realized the full scope and significance of his operations. He has deceived them all for their own good, this "duke of dark corners," and, in the end, as Wilson Knight has suggested,¹³ the Duke seems almost like the

¹² It is Lucio, the libertine, we must remember, who sees her, at the beginning of the play, as "a thing enskied and sainted" (I.iv.34). The same Lucio sees the Duke as "a very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow . . ."; who "would have dark deeds darkly answered; he would never bring them to light. . . . The Duke . . . would eat mutton on Fridays. He's not past it yet; . . . he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt of brown bread and garlic" (III.ii.147, 187-195).

¹³ *The Wheel of Fire*, p. 79; cf. Francis Fergusson in the *Kenyon Review*, XIV (1952), 103 ff.

author himself telling us a story, "speaking for the puppets and pulling the strings before our eyes, to show us how the mercy of the Sermon on the Mount transcends the limitations of human justice and fills human life with the radiance of love. And yet, while the action is going forward, Angelo and Isabel and Claudio, Lucio and Pompey and Barnardine and the rest, all seem real enough; and everyone, under the Duke's direction, makes some kind of choice, even Barnardine, who chooses not to be bothered. The play is not a parable or an allegory, unless we regard it in only one aspect, its symbolic aspect; it is an action, a drama of men and women lustng and hating, loving and suffering, as well. But it has great dramatic suspense and a most happy ending, and the Duke's conduct, until the end, seems very mysterious and arbitrary; and all this makes the play seem something like a fairy tale too. It is this mingling of effects of successful realism with the more obvious artifice of the Duke's role that apparently sits so ill with some critics; though the same mingling of "art" and "artifice"—to use Professor Stoll's distinction—is to be found in *The Tempest*.

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare uses essentially the same design but he alters his narrative method. Prospero explains his purposes, during the course of the action, as overtly as the Duke of *Measure for Measure* conceals his. The dramatic situation, too, is handled differently. *Measure for Measure* shows an action *ab ovo*, from its inception through the appointment of Angelo as the Duke's deputy to the general pardon at the end; whereas *The Tempest* shows only the end of an action, the turning point of which has been achieved before the play opens. The wrong suffered by Prospero occurred when Miranda was a child of three. During the years while Miranda has been growing up, Prospero has been maturing his magic arts and biding the moment appointed that shall deliver his enemies into his hands. He has had ample time to digest his resentment and examine his conscience; and his magic has become so powerful that it must serve as an instrument of great evil or great good.

The real conflict of the play's design is the moral conflict of Prospero, but the play itself shows us only the benevolent results of its resolution. The terms of its resolution are marked for us just before the climax, in Prospero's words to Ariel:

Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick,
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
Do I take part. The rarer action is
In virtue than in vengeance. They being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further. . . . (V.i.25-30)

But his choice has been made before the play opens, as the earlier acts imply. The spectacular storm scene with which the play begins is immediately explained as part of Prospero's design:

Tell your piteous heart
There's no harm done,

he says to Miranda. We listen, with her, to the account of its causes, and learn from the following dialogue with Ariel (I.ii.189 ff.) what to expect in the ensuing scenes.

This is the epitome of the method used throughout. We witness a succession of spectacles and pseudo-conflicts, preceded or accompanied by the explanatory comment of Prospero. In place of the real conflict of Prospero's choice, we have the balanced pseudo-conflicts of Antonio's design to make Sebastian King of Naples, and the drunken efforts of Caliban and the clowns to become lords of the isle. But we are in no suspense about the outcome of either, for we see (and Prospero himself repeatedly informs us; III.iii.90; IV.i.263-264) that there is no resisting his magic; it paralyzes his opponents, deprives them of reason and boils their brains within their skulls; Caliban and his companions are wracked with cramps and dance up to their chins in the filthy-mantled pool beyond Prospero's cell. In the awakening love of Ferdinand and Miranda, Prospero similarly instructs us concerning his purpose and tactics, though here his magic consists simply in the psychology of opposition and the choice remains the lovers' own.

When we reflect upon it, we cannot help noticing how close the parallel is with *Measure for Measure*. In each play, the action is set going and guided throughout by its duke; yet neither Duke Vincentio nor Prospero controls anyone else's choice; rather, they prepare the conditions in which others choose while taking precautions that no one shall give effect to a choice injurious to others. As Vincentio guides Claudio and Angelo to choose penitence and Isabel to prefer mercy to revenge or justice, so Prospero guides Alonso to choose penitence, Ferdinand to choose the love of Miranda, while he himself forgoes revenge or even justice in favor of mercy; and even Caliban shows signs of amendment at the end. As Barnardine and Lucio in *Measure for Measure* are given the chance to repent, though they remain unmoved, so with Antonio and Sebastian; but though all four are pardoned, they are also curbed of their evil propensities.

The parallelism is not precise—nor should we expect it to be; Shakespeare does not repeat himself—but it is fundamental, arising as it does out of the identical ruling conception of the two plays: the virtue of forgiveness and the tempering of justice with mercy; and the parallel may be carried further. In the two dukes, there is the suggestion of an earlier unworldliness and a consequent failure to anticipate evil or cope with it—Prospero in failing to anticipate his brother's plot against him, Vincentio in failing to curb the evil conditions of Vienna. When each duke begins to act effectively, his conduct seems to invoke a certain supernatural aid and sanction. Duke Vincentio's arrangements are compared with the operation of Divine Grace (*Measure for Measure*, V.i.374), while Prospero's "white magic" is explained as divinely sanctioned: Ariel and his fellows are "ministers of fate" (III.iii.60 ff.), and their powers cannot be used to serve an evil purpose, as Sycorax discovered. Thus each duke is seen as the human agent who gives effect to the moral order of things as divinely authorized. And appropriately, after the wrongs have been righted and the reconciliations effected, Duke Vincentio lays aside his friar's robe and returns to his appointed role as ruler of Vienna; Prospero breaks his staff, drowns his book, and resumes his natural function as Duke of Milan. Prospero's method throughout *The Tempest* has been to deceive men for their own good; so with Duke Vincentio; and *The Tempest* shows us the same design of

"measure for measure": the suffering visited upon Prospero is in turn meted to his enemies; but the grace that preserved Prospero also preserves them.

When each duke puts off his disguise and stands revealed in his true temporal status, the Duke of Vienna and the Duke of Milan, each is seen as a *temporal* authority, the good governor who knows how to mingle mercy with justice. Mr. Wilson Knight has associated *Measure for Measure* with the text: "Judge not, that ye be not judged," and has further written: "The central idea of *Measure for Measure* is this: 'And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.' Thus 'justice' is a mockery: man, himself a sinner, cannot presume to judge. That is the lesson driven home in *Measure for Measure*."¹⁴ But this way of putting it overlooks an important point. Duke Vincentio and Duke Prospero are both temporal rulers; that is, to a sixteenth-century way of thought, they are divinely constituted authorities whose duty it is to rule and judge other men, according to the precept and example of Scripture, with justice and mercy. This is precisely the problem with which *Measure for Measure* deals, how to do this; and it is likewise the difficulty that confronts Prospero. Each of them solves the problem, though by different means. Duke Vincentio relies upon a conveniently impenetrable disguise and a certain ubiquitousness that makes it possible for him to influence people's purposes strongly for good; and Prospero has his magic; but each of them stands revealed at the end in his proper role as an earthly ruler who judges his subjects with authority. Each is a type and model of the Christian governor.

Finally, each play contains a subtle implication of the transitoriness, the illusion, even, of the life it depicts. In *Measure for Measure*, this is faintly yet definitely implied through the sustained theatricality of the Duke's role and in his homily to the penitent Claudio, *de contemptu mundi*, in Act III.¹⁵ In *The Tempest*, the theme becomes beautifully explicit in Prospero's famous lines at the end of the Masque of Ceres (IV.i.146-158), and in the epilogue. Here, the breaking of the dramatic illusion is deliberate. Before our very eyes, the great Duke of Milan and the mighty magician vanishes; Prospero stands before us as a poor player, who entreats our applause. The play itself has been "such stuff as dreams are made on."

These affiliations between the two plays can hardly be inadvertent on Shakespeare's part. *Measure for Measure* is an important "source" for *The Tempest*. The later play is a reworking of the theme of the former, employing a different dramatic method and calculated for a different dramatic effect. *Measure for Measure* is all action; *The Tempest* is largely spectacle invested with some of the finest poetry Shakespeare ever wrote. The significance of the one emerges from the pattern of the action, without commentary; of the other, from a succession of magic spells accompanied by the magician's interpretive comment. The method of *The Tempest* is less dramatic, less deeply moving, perhaps; it is pictorially static, "spatial," as Mr. Wilson Knight calls it; and this effect is in remarkable contrast with the temporal, dynamic movement of *Measure for Measure*. But the method of *The Tempest* affords very much

¹⁴ *The Wheel of Fire*, pp. 73, 76; cf. also M. C. Bradbrook, as cited in note 7, above.

¹⁵ III.i.6-34. See also Francis Fergusson in the *Kenyon Review*, XIV (1952), 117-118, for this and other examples of this theme in *Measure for Measure*.

greater scope for the decorating of the theme, with the panoply of the court masque, its gorgeous properties of costume and music and setting, graceful dances and tableaux, and the richer texture of poetic image and symbol. None of these compete with the action or the developing thought of *The Tempest*, made crystal clear in Prospero's explanations. In *Measure for Measure*, the method is indirect and more economical of decoration; and by the same token it is the more deeply stirring; the action contains the thought, the symbolic effect, which is achieved wholly by implication.

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The Unity of *Macbeth*

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THE writing of literary history is often limited by our failure to recognize complication of artistry and meaning. Admittedly, the search for complication in Shakespeare can be anachronistic, but the alternative is not one of continually viewing the Elizabethan scene as a collection of simple though fundamental norms. Norms and conventions can obscure history as effectively as they illuminate it. Especially when dealing with Shakespeare are we in danger of losing sight of Elizabethan individuality as a primary historical fact, and if this is a platitude it is by no means one which is well-heeded in practice. But if we attempt to discover something more historical than the "historical Shakespeare" of sixteenth-century convention, we cannot succeed without discipline in the testing of evidence. Perhaps the most fruitful testing lies in close attention to emphasis and iteration within the plays themselves, and it is by this criterion, among others, that I hope the present study of one of Shakespeare's tragedies will be judged.

Macbeth is a definitive contribution by Shakespeare to the art of unifying poetics of setting and "mood" with dramatic motivation and structure. I hope to show that this achievement is partly based upon four themes—darkness, sleep, raptness, and contradiction¹—which combine to give the play much of its essential character. Although darkness and sleep have long been recognized as thematic elements in *Macbeth*, neither their extent nor their relationship to other ingredients has been noted. Their familiarity, however, makes it unnecessary to define them, so that preliminary explanation may be confined to the two remaining themes. Raptness (Banquo's word) is a quality of obsessed drift, which varies from simple abstraction to a condition bordering upon hypnosis. Contradiction (the Porter's "equivocation") appears in two forms: there is the outright expression of it in "fair is foul and foul is fair," or "nothing is but what is not," and there is its appearance simply as inverted nature, exemplified by the beards of the weird sisters or by Duncan's horses which eat each other. In Elizabethan tradition, however, the two categories were one in that they both connoted chaos and overturned hierarchy. All four themes, incidentally, were conventional, and the purpose of this essay is not to "discover" them but to show with what skill they are amplified, varied, and unified to an end.

¹ The discussion will omit certain similar themes. That of "blood" is so prevalent in *Macbeth* that its association with any discoverable pattern is to be assumed. The "hand-washing" note is not so extensive; while important, it is omitted here because it is not combined consistently with the elements under consideration.

Not only do these four strands underlie the poetry of *Macbeth*; they all appear in terms of outward drama, and thus become clear and direct with no loss of suggestive quality: darkness is a constant setting for the action; sleep is murdered by Macbeth who then "shall sleep no more"; raptness is rendered dramatically before the murder, during it, and afterward (the sleep-walking scene); and contradiction is a key to the tragic "reversal." The themes as drama, moreover, merge completely with their poetic equivalents.

Such a unity of poetic and dramatic structure would scarcely be challenging if the significance of *Macbeth* could not be stated in terms of the design itself, and I shall attempt the statement: *Macbeth* is based upon a familiar motive of tragedy, that of transgression and self-destruction which are compulsive. Obsession becomes therefore a ruling trait of the protagonist, as well as a continuous note in the play. Parenthetically, the stressing of compulsion does not mean that *Macbeth* is a tragedy of "clinical" neurosis since the import is more moral than psychological. Nor is the play a clear tragedy of fate, for although Macbeth's conduct after his traffic with the witches may be determined, his early submission to them can be viewed as an act of free will.² Shakespeare's concern, however, is with obsessive deeds which follow this, so that abstraction under the spell of evil becomes central. Macbeth's tragic course may now be traced in terms of all four themes: Shakespeare presents his surrender to the witches as a surrender to "instruments of darkness," to "secret, black, and midnight hags." Out of it arises the raptness which Banquo twice observes, a nearly hypnotic state which contains, moreover, the element of contradiction, since from its onset "nothing is but what is not." Contradiction within raptness now becomes pervasive: even a splendid rhetoric of conscience is ironically part of Macbeth's absorption in the murder of sleep.³ And as obsession under the spell of darkness leads to further violence in the name of peace and sleep, the ultimate contradiction occurs. Macbeth's abstraction gives way to clear awareness of reality, while Lady Macbeth's early command of "reality" advances into the guilty raptness of walking sleep. Such is the formula; we may now turn to the play itself.

The themes of darkness and contradiction are presented in the opening incantation scene. "When shall we three meet again/ In thunder, lightning, or in rain?" are lines which suggest the gloom of storm; they are succeeded by "When the battle's lost and won," an assertion of contradiction, and are reinforced immediately with another connotation of darkness, "That will be ere the set of sun." This is followed five lines later with the contradiction of "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," and the last line of the short scene then reverts to cloudiness: "Hover through the fog and filthy air." Thus are established in twelve opening lines two of the themes from which the quality of *Macbeth* is derived. And while the ensuing scene of the bleeding messenger is one of

² On this difficult question note, however, the revealing contrast between Macbeth, who is spell-bound from the moment of his encounter with the supernatural, and Hamlet, who exhibits deliberate free choice in determining whether the ghost is "a spirit of health or goblin damned." And while "unorthodox," the concept of predestined sin was scarcely unfamiliar in the sixteenth-century milieu of doctrinal conflict.

³ For development of this relationship between Macbeth's moral virtuousness and his commitment to evil, see Arnold Stein, "Macbeth and Word-magic," *Sewanee Review* (Spring, 1951), 271-284.

mechanical exposition, the effects of darkness and contradiction are not allowed to lapse:

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells.

This introduction to the uneasy turn of battle stresses the blackness of storm proceeding from sunlight, and moves from the simile itself into outright statement of the inversion it represents. Darkness and contradiction are combined in one figure.

The second incantation of the witches which opens Scene iii is significant because the curse pronounced upon the sailor, "master o' the tiger," is the fate which Macbeth himself will suffer:

Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev'nights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

This thematic passage introduces the symbol of sleep similar to the "murdered" sleep of later events, and continues the previous design; it maintains the setting of night, and ends in a contradiction image of the loss-threatened bark which can never be lost. Then, as the "charm's wound up," the line, "So foul and fair a day I have not seen," echoes the fair-foul contradiction which closed Scene i. This is succeeded and augmented by symbols of inverted nature: unearthly inhabitants of earth and bearded women. Now, as the triple prophecy of Macbeth's fortune is concluded, the raptness theme is introduced by Banquo: "My noble partner/ You greet with present grace and great prediction/ . . . That he seems rapt withal," echoed toward the end of the scene with "Look, how our partner's rapt," and two scenes later with the line from Macbeth's letter, "Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it. . . ."

Scene iii is thus one of motivation, for the two moods which will lend character to Macbeth are both presented. His abstracted state which will lead to murder appears through Banquo's lines, and the state of ruined sleep which will follow his act is suggested by the witch's curse upon the sailor. Emphasis of motive comes most strongly, however, from Macbeth himself in a passage which avows the obsession Banquo has described, and does so in now familiar terms of contradiction. This soliloquy expresses raptness through the "suggestion/ Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair . . ." and the "thought" which "shakes so my single state of man that function/ Is smother'd in surmise. . . ." But the passage has begun upon a note of contradiction expressed in "This supernatural soliciting/ Cannot be ill, cannot be good . . .," and it ends with the same theme: "and nothing is/ But what is not." More, the entire soliloquy has been prefaced by Banquo's evocation of another established quality: "The instruments of darkness tell us truths,/ Win us with honest trifles. . . ."

The scene is now concluded with Macbeth's return from the world of obsession in lines which suggest emotional exhaustion: "Give me your favour; my dull brain was wrought/ With things forgotten." The return, however, is momentary, for as Duncan in the ensuing scene confirms Macbeth's title of Cawdor, the descent recurs, again with the amalgam of darkness and abstracted compulsion:

Stars, hide your fires:
Let not light see my black and deep desires;
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

While there is a suggestion of contradiction here, actual emphasis occurs twenty lines later in Scene v after Lady Macbeth has read the letter. Here her description of Macbeth plays cumulatively upon the theme in such lines as "Art not without ambition, but without/ The illness should attend it," "Wouldst not play false,/ And yet wouldst wrongly win," together with "And that which rather thou dost fear to do/ Than wishest were undone."

At this point the messenger's entry with news of Duncan releases the pattern in augmented form. Night and blackness abound: "The King comes here tonight"—"The raven himself is hoarse/ That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan . . ."—"Come, thick night,/ And pall thee in the dunkest smoke of hell/ . . . Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark . . ."—"Duncan comes here tonight"—"O, never/ Shall sun that morrow see"—and the culminating burst of planned evil, again in terms of night:

. . . you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch,
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Notable also is the one clear reference to murder; it combines darkness with blind raptus: "Come thick night . . ./ That my keen knife see not the wound it makes. . . ." Finally, contradiction joins the other themes in symbols of inverted nature: "Come, you spirits/ . . . unsex me here, . . . Come to my woman's breasts,/ And take my milk for gall. . . ." After the mingling in I.v of rapt drift and inverted nature with the blackness of night, there is no need to comment upon the irony achieved in Duncan's line from the next brief scene, "Fair and noble hostess,/ We are your guests tonight."

The opening of I.vii asserts contradiction again in its allusion to that which is done, yet never is to be finished: "If it were done when 'tis done. . . ." The thought is then expanded in a passage which is ultimate, for a turn of phrase, "that but this blow/ Might be the be-all and the end-all here . . .," expresses all of Macbeth's struggle for rest in a present which can offer nothing but guilt from the past and fear for the future. It is partly because the tragedy is built around this irony that the pattern of inversion in *Macbeth* is so telling. To say that the whole play is an extended metaphor of contradiction would be to state a kind of truth, but it would lead us into paradox fetishism, as well as into the adage that tragedy involves irony. Not all tragedy, however, involves

schematic play upon contradiction in skillful combination with other themes, and it is upon this characteristic of *Macbeth* that my interpretation rests.

"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well/ It were done quickly." Done quickly it is; in the speed of the doing Shakespeare shows himself the tested dramatist, for he rests his motivation less upon psychological traits of the protagonist than upon a pervasive quality of the play itself, and thus employs a method suited to concentration. At the basis of this quality which pervades *Macbeth* are the associated themes of raptness, contradiction, troubled sleep, and darkness.

Shakespeare's method, however, is not one of accompanying action with a static "atmosphere." If this has not been apparent it will become so as we observe more closely his practice of merging theme and action into an extraordinary unity which gives the thematic structure a directness required by the stage but allows it to retain its essentially poetic indirection. An example of this appears in the remainder of I.vii. It is in lines following "If it were done when 'tis done" that Macbeth withdraws from raptness, and in one of the strongest passages of the play attempts moral judgment with the speech beginning, "He's here in double trust," which invokes the virtues of Duncan, angels "pleading trumpet-tongued, against/ The deep damnation of his taking-off." Then the decision:

We will proceed no further in this business.
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady Macbeth's attack upon this ominous morality resolves a dramatic clash which ends in the unconscious irony of Macbeth's "Bring forth men-children only. . ." Significantly, her triumph is secured by lines which restate under great stress the two themes of sleep and of raptness or consciousness which abdicates while murder is done: "When Duncan is asleep" she will so tend his chamberlains,

That memory, the warden of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan?

And as her thought is echoed in Macbeth's own words, "When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two/ Of his own chamber . . .," the world of night, sleep, and insensate drift has been reasserted by actual dramatic conflict.

With the opening of Act II movement is accelerated, but Shakespeare intensifies the pattern of themes: "How goes the night . . .?"—"The moon is down . . ."—"There's husbandry in heaven;/ Their candles are all out"—"A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,/ And yet I would not sleep"—"The King's a-bed"—"Good repose the while"—"Get thee to bed." Then as the symbolic dagger appears, a theme comes physically upon the stage as the vision

draws Macbeth in rapt movement toward the murder chamber, to an accompaniment of lines which express this state and blend with it the elements of night and sleep:

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going, . . .
 Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses
 Or else worth all the rest. . . .
 Now o'er the one half-world
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
 The curtain'd sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
 Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd Murder
 Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk . . .
 I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
 Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
 That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

In the last of Act I and the first of Act II we have traced the way in which undercurrents of theme begin to appear as outward action: the note of contradiction in "If it were done when 'tis done," which opened I.vii, led to a moral resurgence which carried Macbeth into sudden conflict with his temptress; his conscience was enveloped and deadened, however, by Lady Macbeth's evocation of murder presided over by drugged sleep. At this, movement toward the murder began with setting established in cumulative terms of sleep and night. And with Macbeth's approach to the chamber of Duncan, raptness took dramatic form in his actual movement across the stage, and in the lines which accompanied it.

We have now come to the murder scene, and it is here that underlying theme and external action meet in climactic unity. As figures of night and darkness preside, the killing of Duncan is made physically the murder of sleep ("Had he not resembled / My father as he slept, I had done 't"), a fusion of symbol with action which leads to the great passage ending "Glamis hath murder'd sleep . . . / Macbeth shall sleep no more." And here raptness again becomes action as Macbeth enters bearing abstractedly the incriminating daggers. Summary or quotation cannot convey his "brainsickly" isolation and Lady Macbeth's attempts to break through the barrier: "Be not lost so poorly in your thoughts."

No less prominent is a translation into dramatic terms of the remaining theme. Our drunken porter is no longer viewed as non-Shakespearian, but the arguments for readmitting him to *Macbeth* are whimsically confirmed when we realize that he is the perfect embodiment of contradiction. Not only are the porter's lines dominated by inverted logic; his character itself is symbolic of the quality. Lear's fool is scarcely more appropriate than he as the spokesman of a world in which *non-sequitur* has final relevance because degree and a stable "chain of being" have been destroyed.⁴ "Knock, knock"—images of contradic-

⁴ But there is a very interesting difference. The theme of *non-sequitur* in *Lear* usually appears as relentless logic which mocks because it is so "logical"; the same theme in *Macbeth* is expressed in the many instances we have noted by inversion of logic which, although it secures a similar effect, is fundamentally the opposite of the *reductio ad absurdum* in *Lear*. A good example of the

tion spill upon the scene: the farmer "that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty"; the equivocator who "could swear in both scales against either scale . . .," whose treason for God's sake could not equivocate him into heaven; lechery which drink "provokes and unprovokes. . . . It makes him and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to. . . ." Truly, nothing is but what is not. With this *tour de force* the murder scenes are complete in their stressing of previously set themes; darkness has been the setting, Duncan has become the stage presence of sleep, and Macbeth himself has "enacted" the quality of raptness. Through the porter Shakespeare dramatizes the fourth element of contradiction.

" . . . In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep . . ." —the porter thus ends his speech, and sleep, with night, now strangely prevails in the hectic scene of discovery. Inquiries which precede the disclosure come in ironic terms of this theme: "Is thy Master stirring?/ Our knocking has awak'd him."—"Is the King stirring . . .?" The setting of darkness is reestablished: "The night has been unruly. . . . The obscure bird/ Clamour'd the livelong night." When mood and suspense are secured in this way, the murder is suddenly revealed in Macduff's passage beginning "Confusion now hath made his masterpiece," and the hue and cry comes in terms of sleep equated with death, and of raptness represented by spirits who rise and walk.

Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! Up, up, and see . . .
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror!

The unmasking of murder within the precincts of sleep is finally capped by Lady Macbeth's "What's the business,/ That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley/ The sleepers of the house?"

II.iv is a choral scene which "points the way" as clearly as the episode of the gardeners in *Richard II*; Ross and a prophetic Old Man meet for the sole purpose of commenting upon what has happened, and the burden of their speech is the contradiction of nature so frequent in *Macbeth* and other Elizabethan accounts of rebellion and regicide. From their discourse we learn that accompanying Duncan's death have been a falcon "hawk'd at" by a mousing owl, together with the king's horses, "turn'd wild in nature," which have overthrown the law of kind to an extent that "they eat each other." And as Macduff brings the news that Malcolm and Donalbain are suspected of the murder, Ross, continuing his role, cries out, " 'Gainst nature still." These expressions of inverted "degree" are hackneyed enough, but there is a revealing quality in Shakespeare's manner of beginning and concluding them. They are introduced in Ross's passage which joins two previous themes by expressing contradiction through imagery of night:

By the clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.

latter is the Fool's reason (I.v.32) "why a snail has a house"—"Why, to put's head in, not give it away to his daughters." This difference between *Lear* and *Macbeth* is not, of course, absolute; it is one of relative emphasis.

Is't night's predominance or the day's shame
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

After starting the scene in this way, Shakespeare ends it with another statement of contradiction in the Old Man's blessing:

God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

In its unobtrusive way, this brief scene is fundamental.⁵ It is a choral piece which appears at the point between culmination of the murder and movement toward expiation by the murderer. Its meaning is drawn from the world of inverted nature and thus, appropriately, it is tied to past action and future event by two assertions of contradiction, one at the beginning and the other at the end. The passage initiating the scene expresses destructive inversion in multiple terms of the night theme which has so prominently governed the rising action; the passage ending the scene invokes restorative inversion through the Old Man's sanctification of those who are about to institute the falling action.

Act III continues the course of murder in which "returning were as tedious as go o'er," and the onslaught upon Banquo is accompanied by the same thematic design which gave meaning to Acts I and II. Even such a dramatic commonplace as the tragic irony of Banquo's departure into the trap prepared for him appears in terms of darkness:

Go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain,

which is strengthened by Macbeth's ironical reply, "Hie you to horse; adieu,/ Till you return at night." The scene now presents Macbeth and the two murderers, and in the soliloquy which ends it the same theme takes prominence: "for't must be done tonight/. . . Banquo, thy soul's flight,/ If it find heaven, must find it out tonight." Should this linkage of Banquo's fate with the symbol of darkness seem incidental, a reference forward to the commentary of Scene vi may be reassuring. There the fate of Banquo is summed up as a direct result of traffic with night:

The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth; marry, he was dead.
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late . . .

And lest the allusion escape as casual, it is immediately repeated:

Whom [Banquo], you may say, if't please you, Fleance killed,
For Fleance fled; men must not walk too late.

If after this reference ahead for validation of method, we return to Scene ii, there will be found a major rendering of the night-spell which dooms Banquo.

⁵ It is interesting that Mr. G. B. Harrison in his recent "disintegrative" treatment of *Macbeth* finds the scene just discussed to be the work of a "collaborator or hack." His reasoning is characteristically subjective: "Neither the rhythms nor the forced and fantastic image of dark Night strangling a travelling lamp are in the manner of Shakespeare, at least not of Shakespeare mature and sober" (*Shakespeare's Tragedies*, London, 1950, p. 186). Sober or not, however, Shakespeare manages here to combine themes which have previously governed the play and which will continue to govern it. As for Mr. Harrison's hack-collaborator, he seems at least to have been well briefed on the themes of contradiction and darkness.

Preceding this, however, the note of contradiction appears in Lady Macbeth's "Naught's had, all's spent,/ Where our desire is got without content," and the murdered sleep symbol comes in redoubled irony with "Duncan is in his grave;/ After life's fitful fever he sleeps well." As before, in close association with these two themes appears that of night. The passage begins:

Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal . . .

And as the night imagery multiplies it evolves to raptness equalling hypnosis: first made sightless by the invocation to darkness, "pitiful day," the symbol of conscience, begins "to droop and drowse."

Come seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood;
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words.

Nor should it escape us that the sleep-raptness note in this address to night also takes auditory form: "summons," "hums," "yawning," "drowse," "rouse" transmit it in the manner of Spenser's *m*, *n*, and *z* sounds in the Cave of Morphæus episode.

The prelude to Banquo's murder thus reproduces and intensifies the setting which accompanied the murder of Duncan. All of the previous themes are repeated, and they appear in such concentrated suspension that the burst of action in III.iii occurs as a sudden liberation of evil: in some twenty lines the death of Banquo is accomplished, just as the killing of Duncan was carried out in a quick scene which followed similar dramatic preparation. But in this kinetic release darkness can still accompany the action and, in fact, strike the climax: "The west yet glimmers . . ."—"Give us a light there!"—"A light, a light!" And as Banquo dies, the Third Murderer: "Who did strike out the light?"

After Banquo's ghost has walked, Macbeth makes his last trial for the certainty, the sleep, which he has lost irrevocably. In IV.i his second visit to the witches will yield the false prophecy of safety, and as the creatures prepare for his coming their incantation draws appreciably upon imagery of darkness: "wool of bat," "owlet's wing," "root of hemlock digg'd i' th' dark," "slips of yew/ Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse"—all of this provides the setting for Macbeth's entry line, "How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!" which recalls Banquo's earlier allusion to the witches as "instruments of darkness." With this greeting Macbeth submits himself finally to the world of night and draws from it the tragic afflatus which will collapse when Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane.

But if Macbeth's drawing of solace from the witches has been his definitive entry into the dark, so has Lady Macbeth's enduring of torment become the

last stage of her traffic with night. Hell here is not fiery, but "murky." Primarily, of course, the sleep-walking scene enacts the raptness or near-hypnosis which has sustained so much of the play. The scene is more, however, than a presentation of this single theme; it offers in some form all of the others—sleep, darkness, contradiction—and thus preserves the unified design. Prior to this scene, raptness has not always been associated with sleep, nor do the two imply each other, but here, from the nature of Lady Macbeth's affliction, they appear in combination. The quality of darkness, of course, is immediately to be linked with somnambulism, but Shakespeare is not content with the obvious association; he specifically introduces fear of night as a motive: "How came she by that light? . . . She has light by her continually; 'tis her command." And the line "Hell is murky" suggests more than random combination. Finally, contradiction in its Elizabethan form appears in a description by the Doctor of sleep-walking as "a great perturbation in nature." It is present, however, in a sense far more pervasive than this, for Lady Macbeth's last scene is the terminus of a great inversion which has been shaping itself throughout the play. In the opening action Macbeth was almost the somnambulist, so stricken was he by prophecy that he drifted toward and through the murder scene in rapt isolation; and also in the beginning it was Lady Macbeth who exhibited supremely the hyper-consciousness, the "outside" directive force which controlled the movements of her husband's abstracted state. From thence, however, the major reversal begins; it is Macbeth who becomes the active, conscious force and his wife who lapses into semi-conscious passivity: "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,/ Till thou applaud the deed"—through this stage of the inversion she passes, as her husband's pragmatic awareness grows, until in the sleep-walking scene she assumes his former role of absent, lonely obsession. So at this stage of the play she has herself become a symbol of contradiction; in a world where fair is foul and foul is fair, where the battle's lost and won, where storms issue from sunlight and night falls by day, the watchful puppeteer has turned into the unseeing puppet. And this transformation has been concluded in a setting of darkness, sleep, and raptness which preserves the prevailing context of themes.

"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" marks the stage at which Macbeth's inner defeat becomes final. Save for the missing sleep theme, this episode also is carried by elements which have supplemented one another throughout and which have so unified action, character, and mood. Here, in the drawing by beacon-light of fools into dusty death, is connoted the scene of Macbeth led raptly by the "air-drawn dagger" and, as well, the spectacle of Lady Macbeth with her light amidst the darkness of walking sleep. Life, the "walking shadow," suggests further this abstracted drift. In the strut and fret of the player, emphasis without sense, comes the note of contradiction which is struck again in the idiot's tale, "signifying nothing." Once more the fatal insight, the function-smothering surmise in terms of contradictory being; again "nothing is but what is not." Lastly, the symbol of darkness persists in "Out, out, brief candle," and a continuation of the night theme is allowed to end the tragic unfoldment after the soliloquy is finished. Macbeth, no longer responsive even to the "night-shriek," can now say "I gin to be awear of the sun. . . ."

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The Cunning of the Scene

ANDREW J. GREEN

N Hamlet's advice to the players Shakespeare goes further than merely to voice his own sentiments on the art of acting. There are clues in this speech, in the Pyrrhus passage, and in The Mousetrap to Shakespeare's own full-bodied concept of the power of drama. The evidence for the presence in *Hamlet* of this developed concept does not necessarily prove or refute either the theory of an indecisive or of a decisive protagonist. It is here presented, however, from the point of view that Hamlet, though amazingly and even mystifyingly complex, is essentially a man of action.

That after a dozen years of work in and for the theater Shakespeare had become intensely conscious of the power of drama upon the human soul, and that in *Hamlet* he found a perfect means of dramatic representation of this concept, is the thesis of this article. The crux of the evidence lies in an affirmation of the structural necessity in the play of the Pyrrhus passage. No Hamlet criticism or scholarship familiar to this author has ever explicitly—let alone heartily—made this affirmation, although mere dramatic probability and, at least at the height of his maturity, Shakespeare's much-praised dramatic economy, present two compelling arguments in its favor. But once the Pyrrhus material is seen as a structural necessity, much follows.

The exponents of both the decisive and the indecisive Hamlet have overlooked or side-stepped the problem of the necessity of the Pyrrhus passage. They have both assumed that the mere presence of the players provides adequate motivation for the inception of the idea of the Mousetrap in Hamlet's mind. The indecisivists, in fact, find that the accidental presence of the players provides Hamlet with an excuse for further delay. This accidental presence, however, is not sufficient motivation for the idea of the Mousetrap. To find really adequate motivation for that idea, the Pyrrhus passage itself and some other aspects of Hamlet's temperament and character must be studied. From this approach certain implications regarding the dramatic nature of the Mousetrap will naturally follow; and these in turn may render it appropriate to venture some hints toward effective dramatic production.

The exponents of delay see the Pyrrhus passage merely as a cue for the John-a-dreams soliloquy which follows. But for the performance of a function so simple Shakespeare, who can effectively motivate Edmund, Richard III, or Reynaldo in a single line or two, has given it much too much space. If it stops there without forwarding the essential action of the play, it is a violation of dramatic economy. Compared on this point with the introduction to the Fortinbras soliloquy, it is for Shakespeare a striking example of dramatic thriftlessness.

The passage is also too long to account for as an intrusion. The young Shakespeare was capable of dragging out the murder of Clarence for its theatrical appeal, and of employing Queen Elizabeth as a necessary cog in the machinery of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; the mature Shakespeare can expand ad libitum Malcolm's not very dramatic testing of Macduff because what could be forgiven and what could not be forgiven in a king was of profound interest to Englishmen, and, because of its timely appeal, he could also insert into *Hamlet* a dialogue on children's companies. But the Pyrrhus passage is not intrinsically worth while as melodrama, or as praise of Elizabeth or James, or as timely commentary, or as an appeal to patriotic fervor or insular pride. Its *raison d'être* cannot be found outside of the play. It must therefore be looked for where it has never been looked for—in the dramatic economy of *Hamlet* itself.

Once mentioned, the fact that the Pyrrhus passage provides solid motivation for the Mousetrap may seem obvious. But it has not been obvious in the past. On the boards—and no matter whether the protagonist is presented as weak or strong—the passage is customarily omitted. The absence in criticism and scholarship of significant comment on the necessity of the material indicates that its function has been understood by few or none.

A study of the commentary in the *Variorum Hamlet* bears this statement out. The discussion turns chiefly upon the quality, poor or otherwise, of the Pyrrhus verses. Theobald alone among the commentators notices the emotional effect of the player's declamation. To him, however, it is included so that Hamlet may "excite his own revenge"—in other words, merely to lead up to the soliloquy. And his conclusion is that Shakespeare had composed a classical tragedy on the Aeneas-Dido theme, from which the declamation was a borrowed passage! Fleay's comment further shows the imperviousness of the *Variorum* commentators to its real function: "The object which Shakespeare had in view in introducing this speech into *Hamlet* was to expose the weakness of his opponent Nash as a playwright, and to utilize a piece of work which he had lying idle by him." And the recent criticism of Dover Wilson, Granville-Barker, Kittredge, Stoll, J. Q. Adams, and others is as oblivious to the dramatic purpose of the passage as is the older.

Probably one reason that its relation to the Mousetrap has not been seen is that readers and critics conditioned by the indecisive Hamlet of Goethe and Coleridge would be unlikely to see it, or to give it any emphasis or reflection if they did. Hamlet, paralyzed in will, snatches at any excuse for delay. The Mousetrap therefore appears as an easy stratagem to conceive of, the kind of idea that would occur to any procrastinator. A second reason is that *Hamlet* is so familiar to us all that we take the events of the plot for granted. We have read it many times, and always under the mesmerism of its traditional greatness. The Mousetrap is merely something to be expected, something that happens next. At best it is admired as a thought that came to Hamlet by lucky chance, or was momentarily suggested by the casual advent of the players—the most natural idea in the world.

It could not have been taken in this way by the Elizabethans who enjoyed its first run at the Globe. This was an audience that had given many a boisterous hand to the mad craft with which old Hieronimo had avenged himself upon his

enemies. Attending either the *Ur-Hamlet* or Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, it did not know for sure what was coming next. It felt a sense of curiosity and expectancy impossible for us moderns to recapture, no matter how much we try to approach the play in the mood of a first-nighter. Not that modern criticism has not glorified the Mousetrap, but it has always been for its effect on Claudius and for Hamlet's histrionics rather than for its inception. A clever stratagem: yes, but *how* clever is it, and *why* is it so clever?

To this writer, the weightiest evidence for an indecisive Hamlet is the three pertinent soliloquies, the words of the Ghost in the Queen's chamber, and Laertes' willingness to cut Hamlet's throat "i' the church." But it is impossible for him to conceive of himself, or of any typical member of a modern *Hamlet* audience, or of any cultivated Elizabethan, as slaying his uncle—and glorying in the savage thrust and the spouting blood—on the mere word of a Ghost. To an Elizabethan, with an acute fear of the disguises of demons, it should be even harder than for a modern. Hamlet's dramatic task is to possess himself of unquestionable evidence of the King's innocence or guilt, avenge the crime, and expose the guilt to the world; his task is to execute justice, not to commit murder.

But the crime of Claudius is dark, occult, undivulged; the bloody hand is hidden; the villain that, under covert and convenient seeming, practiced on King Hamlet's life, smiles still; the guilt (if any) is so closely pent up that it may be the Judgment Day before it rives its concealing continent. All knowledge of it is locked in the soul of Claudius. There are no wisps of hair, no tell-tale finger-prints, no bits of torn clothing, no blood-stains, no buttons. Hamlet is cast in the role of a detective to whom the discovery of any convincing evidence seems utterly impossible.

The way Horatio, who has already been taken into his confidence, responds to Hamlet's charge—

There is a play tonight before the King.
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle

—indicates how clearly and fully he understands Hamlet's difficulty. It is impossible that it had not been the subject of a discussion in which the trustworthiness of the Ghost was deeply considered. The circumspect and wise Horatio, we may be sure, never counseled the Prince to act without further evidence, to thrust with passion and without reflection the assassinating sword at once into the back of the unsuspecting King.

A playwright could scarcely devise for his protagonist a problem more baffling and maddening than Hamlet's. Small wonder that the close of Act II his frustration bursts forth with such vehemence.

No rogue, peasant slave, or John-a-dreams, however, could escape from this labyrinthine maze as does Hamlet.

The thought that Claudius may be made to reveal his secret if his crime is dramatically enacted before his eyes does not occur to Hamlet in a vacuum.

It does not come with the arrival of the players, though that is certainly opportune. Instead, Shakespeare carefully motivates it and prepares for it. Hamlet's brilliance in conceiving the stratagem is scarcely lessened by the fact that he has heard of crimes brought to light through the vicarious experience of drama. If the power of drama is strategically employed, the brains of the strategist must, by the shaping, the emphasis, and the necessity of the plot, be admired. Admiration for Hamlet's stratagem is, in fact, a necessary assumption of the play.

In *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* the motif is employed as a stratagem; it therefore probably occurred in the *Ur-Hamlet*, the author of which undoubtedly derived it from three or four contemporary stories. What Shakespeare did was to motivate the device far beyond the motivation of his sources: that is, he has made it artistically convincing.

In Shakespeare, the man to whom such a stratagem could occur must not merely possess a profound and penetrating mind and a knowledge of the souls of men, but must also be a lover of drama and thoroughly versed in the field. Such is Hamlet: he banterers with the players on terms of intimacy. The First Player is an "old friend." Hamlet knows two plays thoroughly; he must know many well. Of one he has at least seventeen consecutive lines by heart. Another he knows well enough to insert some dozen or sixteen lines at the most critical point. His taste in drama (this must be taken for granted) is above reproach; he loves the speech of Aeneas, which is caviar to the general, for its lack of affection, its wholesomeness, its sweetness.

Hamlet is also an actor: in this speech we have an excellent sample of his quality. In the Mousetrap, too, he is superb: he plays one part to the court, another to Ophelia, another to the Queen, another—the finest and best—to the King. His performance, as he notes to Horatio, might well win him a fellowship, and a whole one, in a cry of players. Moreover, he is also acting, burlesquing, in his advice—

Nor do not saw the air too much with your
hand, thus, but use all gently.

As a critic of acting his judgment is disciplined by observation, taste, and intellect.

His dramatic sensitivity is prompter to his expectant spiritual intuition.

As Hamlet begins to quote the speech he chiefly loved—

'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido, and thereabout
of it especially where he speaks of Priam's
slaughter

—a sense of empathy with Aeneas and the poetic material captures him. He becomes an eye-witness of the bloody figure of Pyrrhus. Instinctively, as he recites, he begins to act the part, and at the same time his feeling for the dramatic art becomes so keen that he wants a professional to continue—that is, to heighten the empathy still further. His performance elicits from Polonius an ejaculation which, for all its pomposity, may well contain less flattery than startled admiration.

Already keyed up by Hamlet's fine rendition, the First Player begins. He is now forward center, playing not only to Hamlet but to the whole audience

of the Globe. This is another of those dramatic passages in which a single actor—such as Jaques, Marc Antony, King Lear, or Hamlet himself—so close to the spectators as to be almost among them, can establish a sense of rapport with his audience almost impossible to the modern stage. For the Globe theater, for Hamlet, the actor conjures up the image of burning Troy. Pyrrhus strikes wide, but tottering old King Priam falls. The tower of Ilium crashes. In a vivid tableau, the sword of Pyrrhus is poised to strike. There is a silence like that before a storm. It is broken by a clap of thunder. The rhythm of the piece rolls toward a rhetorical climax.

Old Polonius, not yet fully captured, breaks in with a comic interruption. Then the speech goes on. With the passion of Hecuba the First Player is at his best, for he has forced his soul

so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit.

The empathetic emotion is at its height. Even old Polonius, forgetting for a moment his own self-importance, is on the verge of weeping:

Look, whe'er he has not turned his colour and
has tears in 's eyes. Prithee, no more.

Hamlet, startled, notes the power of drama on Polonius and feels it on himself. The idea falls from heaven: here is a means to pierce the deepest recesses of a guilty soul.

Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play "The Murder of Gonzago"?
.... You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines,
which I would set down and insert in 't, could ye not?

About my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions.
..... I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,
I know my course. ... The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King!

The Pyrrhus material was not included in *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* and therefore probably did not appear in the *Ur-Hamlet*. It is in all likelihood an addition by Shakespeare to his sources to provide convincing motivation for the Mousetrap.

If it is through the power of drama that Claudius is to be trapped, the drama which traps him must be powerful. Hamlet is much concerned with

this: it can be no other than his speech of a dozen or sixteen lines which is the subject, probably just after the conclusion of a rehearsal, of his advice to the First Player:

Speak the speech, I pray you, trippingly
on the tongue, but if you mouth it, as some
of your players do, I had as lief the town-
crier had spoke my lines.

Even Professor Stoll has missed the implications here: "The only place where Hamlet really is irrelevant is that which no psychological theory can justify, his discussion of theatrical art and business." Although the Player is a professional highly skilled in his art, it is very relevant indeed for the Lord Hamlet to coach him in the speech which is to spring the trap. Hamlet refers to these lines again in his charge to Horatio—

. . . if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech

—and from this we know that it is the First Player-Aeneas who speaks the lines which unkennel the King's guilt. We have kept track of First Player-Aeneas-Lucianus, Hamlet's "old friend," from scene to scene.

Both Hamlet's concern about the Mousetrap and an emphasis upon the ingenuity of his stratagem tell against Dover Wilson's ingenious theory that the dumb-show took Hamlet by surprise. He further supposes the King and Queen so engaged in merry talk that they happen not to look at the dumb-show. But Hamlet knew "The Murder of Gonzago" thoroughly enough to set down a dozen or sixteen lines in it; therefore he knew of the dumb-show. Shakespeare would not deceive Hamlet and the audience by substituting an irrelevant theatrical accident for organic and actable psychological drama. And in an affair that concerned him so deeply Hamlet cannot have planned carelessly. Dover Wilson's theory, moreover, is almost certainly beyond the possibilities of lucid representation to any audience.

Kittredge's "double-tooth" theory with its insights psychological interpretation, however, fits well into this concept of Hamlet's brilliance. Hamlet provides the shock treatment: he spills the secret at once, before a really high degree of empathy between the King and "A Fellow" has been established. He now has his antagonist on the rack, and it is Claudius' exhaustion in being subjected to one turn of the screw after another—this, and his inevitably increasing empathy with the play that follows—that finally bring him down. The dumb-show is not an intrusive theatrical accident. It is part of Hamlet's cunning and the cunning of the scene. It prepares, in short, for every one of Hamlet's remarks to the King just before the smashing climax.

In the production of a Shakespearian play, the text of which furnishes only a few clues to stage settings and action, a director has many options. To achieve an effect in harmony with Shakespeare's intention—which in this part of *Hamlet* is to set forth powerfully the power of drama—he may employ whatever dramatic devices best forward his purpose. The following therefore mingles interpretative evidence in support of the thesis of this article with suggestions toward appropriate dramatic representation.

In the presentation of the play within the play, the director's problem of effecting empathy is double-barrelled. There is an objective empathy—that between Claudius and the Mousetrap—which must be acted and must be visible to the audience. There is also the empathy which the audience must feel; it must experience an empathetic relationship with the Mousetrap itself. That is, direction and acting should produce an increasing effect of familiarity and reality as the dialogue of the Player King and the Player Queen progresses, and should achieve a startling vividness as Lucianus commits the act of murder.

To such a feeling of empathy, the nearness of the Elizabethan actor to his audience was a tremendous aid. Even the "inner room" of the Elizabethan stage was close to the audience. The Globe, moreover, compared to most of the auditoriums in which Shakespeare is professionally acted today, was compact and acoustically perfect. In their attitudes, their gestures, their facial expressions, the passions of the actors could be distinctly seen, and in their voices could be distinctly heard, from any point in the theater. On the modern stage, however, if the present line of interpretation is sound, it is almost imperative to bring the Mousetrap from its usual position at back center to the center or even farther forward. Certainly Lucianus, at one of the high climactic points of both *Hamlet* and the Mousetrap, Lucianus, who is the very catch of the trap, Lucianus, who in this action must outperform even his Pyrrhus recitation, must be one of the three focal centers of attention, not a shadowy minor actor flitting about near the drop. The three groups of actors—the Hamlet group, the Mousetrap group, the King group—should share equally in emphasis and in lighting. A spatial step as simple as this would help to insure reasonable audience empathy with the Mousetrap and to suggest more effectively the tension to which Claudius is subjected.

The role of Lucianus must be well cast and coached: this is a role to be played, not suppressed. It should be performed without comedy, with intensity, with a slight touch (perhaps) of melodrama but a very authentic effect of reality.

It is a commonplace of criticism that Shakespeare distinguishes the verse of the Pyrrhus passage and of the Mousetrap from the style of *Hamlet* itself in order to set off the interpolated recitation and play from the main drama. The verse of both is excellent in one sense at least: it effectively achieves this purpose. And Hamlet and Shakespeare both require us to assume its excellence as dramatic verse. We have no independent judgment in this matter: it is excellent because they say it is. And the play within the play cannot be like the play. But most direction has stopped with the unlikeness, and we behold the spectacle of Claudius being bowled over by mere puppetry. Olivier's motion picture is an index to the attitude: Claudius sits through the scene *with his back* to the audience, deprived of any genuine opportunity to act his part, and then suddenly rises in a fit of wild hysteria. The Mousetrap, in short, is usually put on not merely as if it were the easiest thing in the world to think of, but also the easiest thing in the world to execute.

The principle of dramatic empathy forbids so static a presentation. When the trap is sprung, Claudius must be in a state of hypnotic attention to the play. What must influence him so powerfully ought at least to possess, at that moment, a convincing degree of probability and verisimilitude for the audience. There must be, in short, a doubly empathetic development in the Mousetrap—

the empathetic spell of Claudius must be seen (this is worth repeating) and the tension of the Mousetrap and the horror of the murder must be felt, by the audience of *Hamlet*.

An analogy with *Il Pagliacci* may be helpful. Actors in this opera, it must be admitted, frequently fail to take full advantage of the dramatic possibilities of the play within the play: that is because they like to sing too well to concern themselves with what is merely dramatic. This opera nevertheless presents another example of what at first should appear as a quaint, puppetlike action within another action. The dramatic, as distinguished from the musical, effect of the opera depends entirely upon a progression—cumulatively rhythmic rather than perfectly steady—from unreality to reality. Gradually, disturbingly, the action in the interpolated play should become more like that of the action we have already seen on the stage. An illusion of reality should be built up within another illusion of reality. At the climax, the two illusions suddenly coalesce into a single illusion and—"The comedy is ended!"

The dialogue of the Player King and the Player Queen is just sufficiently extended to provide time for a progression from a sense of quaintness and unreality to one of reasonable familiarity. The passage is directed to test Gertrude, not Claudius. This is good incidental theater, but, being tangential to Hamlet's central purpose, it is not good enough to account for the prolixity of the dialogue. Three better reasons for the dramatic interval are that Claudius cannot miss the developing parallelism between the dumb-show and the play, that it permits his growing dread to increase to a gripping fear, and that it permits the audience time enough to adjust to the new illusion. To achieve just the right degree of audience participation in the Mousetrap requires skillful acting. The Player King and the Player Queen should become more believably human, lifelike, passionate, as the play moves on. In contrast with the puppetry and pantomime of the dumb-show, their dialogue should gradually develop into something like convincing verisimilitude.

The empathy may be further heightened. There should be a slight but unmistakable suggestion of Claudius in "A Fellow" of the dumb-show and an even greater resemblance in Lucianus. Costuming and makeup, and especially the bearing, the gestures, the voice of Lucianus will forward this purpose. The likeness should not be overdone, but it must be distinctly visible both to Claudius and the audience. Lucianus is of course not in on Hamlet's secret and the part should not be played as though he were. Hamlet might consider the likeness a lucky accident (but he undoubtedly coached Lucianus, let us remember); in any event the likeness is dramatically desirable to Hamlet and to director alike.

The part of Claudius is not one to sit out; it is a part that calls for superb acting. This is a point that directors and actors often overlook. A slight, barely perceptible start at the dumb-show, followed in the Mousetrap by a deepening frown, a slowly increasing rigidity broken occasionally by efforts to show indifference, at length the rapt gaze of one who sees an appalling horror—these are not beyond the capacity of a good actor. Rather, like many of the longer speeches and soliloquies the dramatist has scattered through his plays, they present a characteristically Shakespearian opportunity for the actor to show his mastery of his art.

Since the jaws of the Mousetrap spring shut at a moment of intense empathy,

any device which will heighten the effect is unquestionably organic to Shakespeare's dramatic intent.

The climax of the Moustrap is at once high theater and high drama. When Claudius saw his crime in the puppetlike action of the dumb-show, he felt more surprise than empathy. But Hamlet fixes in his mind the conviction that the pantomime was no accident—

Marry, this is micing mallecho; it means MISCHIEF

—and also fixes the apprehension of what may follow. Thus warned, Claudius knows for certain that the developing parallelism between the dumb-show and "The Murder of Gonzago" now being acted will be carried further, will be carried out; during the dialogue of the Player King and Queen his guilt and fear must steadily mount as he waits to participate vicariously in the murder he had himself performed.

The Player King sleeps. The victim of Hamlet's psychological rack endures his anguish heroically:

Have you heard the argument? Is there no
offense in it?

Hamlet's reply insistently increases the illusion. He hurls the King's guilt in his face:

No, no, they do but jest, POISON in jest; no
offense i' th' world.

Lucianus enters. Action and illusion are now swiftly, vividly stepped up. This is the finest actor of the troupe, the Aeneas who so moved Polonius. There is a moment of tableau before Lucianus-Claudius speaks. His black thoughts are to be read in his looks, in his "damnable faces." Hamlet ("Begin, MURDERER") turns the screw still harder. Can Claudius sit through this when it will be accentuated by voice and gesture? Lucianus speaks. Claudius has heard that voice before; it is the voice of his own soul. Swiftly the illusion intensifies. Claudius sees himself and the audience sees Claudius pour the poison into the sleeper's ears. The realities of play and play within play have coalesced; and Hamlet gives one last fierce, triumphant wrench to the screw. And Claudius gives way.

The argument upon the subject of Hamlet's decisiveness is too complex to be settled by this interpretation. If the interpretation itself is acceptable, it can be fitted into the picture of either a decisive or an indecisive Hamlet. But it strengthens the argument for his decisiveness. The Moustrap of a mere procrastinator would hardly require the ingenious structural motivation which Shakespeare has so skillfully provided. Nor would it require the exercise by Hamlet of high genius in its inception, or of such remarkable spiritual and intellectual subtlety. If Hamlet is still a delayer, these qualities appear as symptoms of frenetic self-delusion, genius gone crazy; the play itself becomes a document in psychic disorder, and the hero a psychopathic case well outside of humanity.

The Hamlet of the Great Stratagem appears in his main outlines as a man of action, a hero who solves the first half of his terrible problem by an amazing

tour de force, and then hews his way through almost insuperable difficulties to the magnificence of his final success and failure. He is a subtler, more complex, more mystifying, more brilliant protagonist than before. He is not, like the delaying Hamlet, a paradoxical inversion of pre-Shakespearian tradition. The shrewdness of his ancestral archetype in Saxo, Belleforest, and Kyd is raised through Shakespeare's transforming power to qualities of subtle intuitive perception and intellectual brilliance. The Hamlet who has delved deeply into criminal psychology, who has employed the power of drama to rive a guilty heart, is much more admirable than the delayer of the Romantics and the less complex driving avenger of Professor Stoll.

If this interpretation is convincing, how congenial to Shakespeare the motif must have been! If it is true that in Hamlet he put more of himself than into any other character, then into Hamlet the protagonist and *Hamlet* the play he must have put more of himself as a dramatist. This propriety of relationship of play and protagonist to the dramatist, to his temperament and imagination, to the seriousness and depth of his sense of his art, to the daily stuff of his thoughts, is a contributing argument in support of the interpretation. In the Pyrrhus speech, in Hamlet's advice to the players, and in the Mousetrap, in short, Shakespeare has made his greatest play an eloquent tribute to his own love of the dramatic art and his respect for its power to influence the souls of men.

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The Elizabethan Stage and Shakespeare's Entrance Announcements

WARREN D. SMITH



VERY reader has noticed that for many entrances on to an occupied stage¹ Shakespeare, often with dramatic effectiveness, to be sure, has an occupant announce the approach of a newcomer by stating: "Here he comes," "Look where he comes," or the like.² But heretofore it has not been demonstrated how admirably the convention, discarded, not unnaturally, as we shall see, by the modern dramatist,³ is fitted to certain physical peculiarities of the Elizabethan stage.

The immediate stagecraft function of the device, of course, was to signal the audience (modern plays use other means) that the attention of characters on the stage had been drawn to the approach of the enterers,⁴ in order to give these characters the excuse necessary to shift their positions in preparation for a graceful regrouping with the newcomers. No more than modern actors, of course, would Elizabethan players on the stage at the time of an entrance need the announcement as a cue for what to do next. But whenever a stage occupant, Elizabethan or modern, is supposed to change his position because of the entrance of a newcomer, such a movement should be tied in with the entrance as smoothly as possible. And because of physical aspects peculiar to the Elizabethan public stage, the entrance announcement seems to have been one of the few appropriate methods by which Shakespeare could inform his audience that stage occupants were fully aware of the enterer's approach, that it was their awareness which precipitated their stage movement. Either by making such an announcement himself or by receiving the word from a fellow player, frequently the actor on Shakespeare's stage gives his audience the necessary justification for his movement before the enterer has the chance to speak, to be greeted by one of the occupants,⁵ or to enter the stage picture. To anyone unfamiliar with

¹ I count 450 entrance announcements in Shakespeare. The 718 entrances on to a cleared stage, at the beginnings of scenes, of course, offer no opportunity for the use of the device.

² That such lines are not for the identification of enterers is shown by the fact that the great majority of announcements do not include the name of the enterer.

³ A careful examination of European, British, and American plays from Ibsen to the present revealed only widely scattered, incidental examples of anything resembling the Elizabethan entrance announcement.

⁴ Though the entrance announcement must have helped to draw the attention of the audience, also, to the enterer, that it was not needed for this function is demonstrated, I think, by the fact that fully 203 enterers draw attention to themselves by speaking immediately after the announcement of their entrance.

⁵ In fifty-nine cases the announcer himself greets the newcomer immediately after his entrance and in forty-three instances the recipient of the announcement greets the enterer instantly.

theater practice, it might seem that the opening line of the enterer who is to speak immediately after the announcement of his entrance would provide such justification, but speech from the newcomer would come too late, more often than not, to be practicable. For example, in Shakespeare, as in modern plays, exits precipitated by impending entrances⁶ and withdrawals to hiding places for the purpose of eavesdropping on the newcomers⁷ obviously must be completed before enterers reach the stage. And, as one or two examples will illustrate, the overwhelming majority (429 of 450) of the entrance announcements in Shakespeare's plays, those that prepare the stage for a regrouping that will include both occupants and enterers, should be delivered some time before the entrance is completed to achieve smooth results. An illustration from *Titus Andronicus* is instructive:

Captain. Romans, make way. The good Andronicus. . . . (I. i. 64)⁸

followed, in the quarto, by the unusually full notation—

. . . enter two of *Titus'* sons, and then two men bearing a coffin . . . then two other sons; then *Titus Andronicus*; and then *Tamora*, . . . and her two sons, . . . with *Aaron the Moor* and others, as many as can be. . . .

—a notation presenting sufficient reason for the captain's request of his fellow Romans to "make way." Both the captain and his companions, surely, could well use some kind of warning beforehand to shift their positions fast enough to prepare the stage for the graceful entrance of so many characters as this. And, of course, the entrance announcement, "The good Andronicus," adequately motivates the captain's giving such a warning in good time. Of similar nature is an announcement made in *Much Ado About Nothing* (II. i. 87-88), by Leonato to Antonio and the other members of his family on the stage with him:

The revellers are ent'ring, brother. Make good room,
succeeded by the stage direction,

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, and Balthasar, Don John,

because the notation in the quarto at the beginning of the scene⁹ indicates at least five characters already on the stage when this entrance of five more is accomplished. Thus Leonato's advice to "make good room" precedes the entrance of the revellers so that they may join the stage grouping with a minimum of awkward, belated shifting on the part of Leonato and his family. And, as in the previous example quoted from *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare motivates Leonato's timely advice with an announcement, "The revellers are ent'ring."

⁶ See *Love's Labour's Lost* V. ii. 308-309; *Romeo and Juliet* I. i. 163; and *Measure for Measure* IV. i. 7-9.

⁷ See *Richard II* III. iv. 24-28; *Much Ado About Nothing* II. iii. 36-38; and *Hamlet* III. iv. 7.

⁸ Though taken originally from the basic text (first good quarto or First Folio), all quotations, both of dialogue and stage directions, are modernized according to G. L. Kittredge, ed., *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Boston, 1936.

⁹ The entrance notation in the quarto adds "his wife," the mute Innogen.

And for similar motivation, though with less obvious wording, the entrance announcement is used abundantly in the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries,¹⁰ as well as in his own.

But why was the entrance announcement, seldom if ever used by modern dramatists,¹¹ habitually employed by Shakespeare, along with his contemporaries? The answer, I think, depends dramaturgically at least,¹² upon the vast difference between the modern shallow stage, framed by a proscenium arch, and the Elizabethan outer platform, projecting deeply into the pit of the public playhouse. What justified Shakespeare's resorting to the entrance announcement, often extra-dramatically, I believe, were two characteristics peculiar to the Elizabethan outer platform stage: its great depth—nearly twice that of many modern stages—and, in the absence of a proscenium arch, the extreme upstage position of its two main entranceways.

That Shakespeare's employment, even undramatically, of the entrance announcement was made appropriate by these important physical aspects of his outer platform is most clearly illustrated, I feel, by a rather obtrusive example from an early play, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. In this instance the player who announces the entrance stands alone on the stage. As "Proteus" he is telling the audience how infatuated he has permitted himself to become with "Silvia." Then he abruptly breaks off his soliloquy with these rather undramatic lines:

... But here comes Thurio. Now must we to her window
And give some evening music to her ear. (IV. ii. 16-17)

and as soon as Thurio and the musicians with him have completed their entrance this is exactly what is done. But why does the dramatist have Proteus announce the entrance? Why not, as in a modern play, let him reveal he sees the approach of Thurio by having him join the newcomer under Silvia's "window" without preliminary explanation? For one thing, more than likely the actor in the part delivered his soliloquy, on the remarkably deep Elizabethan platform (29 feet, according to Adams¹³), from pretty far downstage, certainly with the extreme upstage entranceways some distance to his rear. That a performer could be in such intimate touch with the majority of his audience, we

¹⁰ Elizabethan plays other than Shakespeare's with more than a dozen entrance announcements, for example, are Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, Greene and Lodge's *Looking-Glass*, Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and *Edward II*, Chapman's *All Fools* and *Gentleman Usher*, Dekker's *Honest Whore* (I), Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, *Every Man Out* (at least thirty-two), and *Bartholomew Fair*. Indeed, there seem to be few, if any, leading plays from Marlowe to the closing of the theaters without entrance announcements.

¹¹ It is perhaps interesting to note that the entrance announcement really begins to fall into disuse immediately after the Restoration, with the advent of the proscenium arch: e.g., Otway's *Venice Preserved* has but few instances and neither Dryden and Howard's *Indian Queen* nor Buckingham's *Rehearsal* has any. On the other hand, many Restoration plays (e.g., Etheridge's *Man of Mode*, Lee's *Rival Queens*, and Dryden's *All for Love*) employ the entrance announcement regularly. That the convention persisted after the introduction of the proscenium arch was somewhat puzzling until A. C. Sprague offered me the reminder that a considerable apron, along with the old doors, survived long after the Restoration, retaining a closer resemblance to the Elizabethan platform than to the modern picture-frame stage.

¹² Although, as with any convention he adopts, Shakespeare frequently utilizes the entrance announcement to heighten the dramatic effectiveness of a situation, I confine myself throughout this discussion to the usefulness of the device purely from the standpoint of stagecraft. Certainly many, if not most, of even Shakespeare's entrance announcements are not dramatically impressive.

¹³ John C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse, Its Design and Equipment* (1942), p. 97.

are told,¹⁴ was the great advantage of the public stage for the rendering of soliloquies. Also, it is generally accepted that the "window" to which Thirio, as well as Proteus, goes immediately after the entrance was at the extreme rear of the Elizabethan platform—was, in fact, part of the front wall of the second level of the tiring house. Thus the entrance announcement, "here comes Thirio," neatly gives Proteus the opportunity to assure his audience he is aware of the presence of a newcomer who enters behind him and who goes to another location (under Silvia's window) behind him. Without the entrance announcement, in other words, as Proteus turns away and walks upstage to join Thirio under Silvia's window, spectators would be left to puzzle out for themselves, how, while facing front for his soliloquy, Proteus saw the enterers at his back. Actually, to be sure, Proteus would be equally blind to the approach whether or not he made an entrance announcement, but the artifice of the announcement, surely, would induce the audience to overlook the fact. Far more natural, in contrast, is an example in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II. i. 58-59) where two players on the stage warn each other in turn to move before each of two separate entrances:

Puck. . . . But room, fairy! Here comes Oberon.
Fairy. And here my mistress. . . .

followed by a stage direction—

*Enter the King of Fairies, at one door, with his Train;
and the Queen, at another, with hers*

which discloses that Oberon and Titania enter through two different doors. What occurs seems fairly easy to picture. Facing in the general direction of the door (though downstage from it) through which Oberon enters, Puck at once signals the audience he notices the approach and gives the fairy—who with his back turned toward the door cannot be expected by the audience to see Oberon—the excuse to move for the King's entrance. In his turn, the fairy reveals his own awareness of Titania's approach through the door on the opposite side of the stage and at the same time warns Puck—who with his back to that door cannot see her—to prepare for the Queen's entrance. Puck's "But room, fairy!" might indicate, of course, that at least one of the stage occupants was standing directly in the pathway of enterers and therefore had to scamper out of the way to avoid collision. But whatever the result of the two entrance announcements, I believe they are primarily justified by the fact that each stage occupant, standing, like Proteus, with his back to one of the entranceways, could not readily be assumed by the audience to see the approach of newcomers behind him. Unlike Proteus, who must have faced front for his soliloquy, however, Puck and the fairy, because they must have at least partly faced each other for their dialogue, could each be expected to detect an entrance through the door towards which he was turned.

That players standing any distance downstage on Shakespeare's deep Elizabethan platform, with backs turned to the upstage entranceways, could not easily be assumed by spectators to see the approach of enterers seems also to be one of the reasons, at least, for those instances (seventy-nine in the plays) in

¹⁴ See Darrell Figgis, *Shakespeare, a Study*, London, 1911, pp. 94-96 and Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, First Series, London, 1927, Intro., pp. xxx-xxxii.

which one stage occupant announces to another: "Look where he comes," "See where he comes," or the like. Only six plays¹⁵ omit the "look where" type. In all these entrance announcements, too, though some admittedly are dramatically effective, what takes place is rather evident. As Puck and the fairy must have done, two actors stand on the deep platform stage, each with his back toward one of the upstage entranceways. A third player enters, or is about to enter. The one who faces in the general direction of the door through which the newcomer is making his entrance, and who thereby can be assumed by the audience to detect it visually (if only out of the corner of his eye), tells the other player with him to turn around and look in that direction. What better excuse to spectators could the player with his back to the entranceway offer for abruptly turning away from the man with whom he has been conversing than the fact that this very fellow tells him to?

The modern actor, on the other hand, performing on a picture-frame stage little more than fifteen feet deep from the front curtain line to the rear, often with entranceways downstage, need utilize no such dramaturgical justification for stage movement. In the first place, the proscenium arch and the apron before it combine to make the modern stage seem ever more shallow than it actually is. And the pertinent fact that all the members of a modern audience normally view a play only from the front of the stage rather than from three sides of it, as Elizabethans in the public playhouses did, markedly increases the effect of shallowness. Hence, whenever the action demands it, a present day actor can be located almost anywhere on the stage and still seem—from the viewpoint of the audience out front—to be capable of seeing out of the corner of his eye the player who is making his entrance. Indeed, I have often coached an actor to greet immediately another actor who is entering at a point fully ten feet upstage from his own position. The picture-frame illusion makes this look natural, even from a seat at one of the extreme sides of the theatre. Such awareness of an entrance is not as acceptable, of course, if the newcomer enters from upstage dead center, or if the stage occupant stands with his back to a downstage entrance. But in these instances the actor frequently is given the excuse to turn around and greet the newcomer naturally (if he is supposed to do so) by means of a "door slam" offstage catching his auditory attention or a maid who flatly announces the arrival. There is no evidence that either Shakespeare's Theatre or Globe used door slams, and scenes where a domestic servant is the appropriate announcer of an entrance are few in the old drama. Yet, significantly enough, Shakespeare did employ, whenever he could do so fittingly, a device similar to the former of these modern ones to offer some of his players on the stage an excuse to give ground for the entrance of others. Instead of the modern door slam, "A Sennet," "Sound a Trumpet," "Flourish," and so on, provides the offstage signal for numerous Shakespearian entrances, whenever such sound effects are in keeping with the rank of the approaching newcomers. Moreover, of the 450 announcements of all types in the plays, only eight¹⁶ are delivered in addition to sound effects, demonstrating an admirable economy in usage.

¹⁵ *Richard III*, *Richard II*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *1 Henry IV*, *Henry V*, and *Coriolanus*.

¹⁶ *2 Henry VI* IV. viii. 3-5; *Richard III* IV. iv. 135; *As You Like It* I. ii. 156-157; *Hamlet* III. ii. 95-96; *All's Well That Ends Well* III. v. 78; *King Lear* I. i. 34; *Antony and Cleopatra* I. i. 10 (the only "look where" type); and *Coriolanus* II. ii. 40.

Perhaps, also, it may be of interest to note that for those entrances which evidence in the text seems to establish as having occurred on an already occupied inner stage,¹⁷ Shakespeare normally omits the entrance announcement. Such entrances, surely, should not have presented the problem posed by the outer platform, where occupants often must have found themselves some distance downstage from the entranceway. The shallowness of both inner stages, which according to Adams¹⁸ were only seven or eight feet deep from curtain line to arras, certainly would have obviated dramaturgical need for the entrance signal. For players occupying an inner stage during an entrance were doubtless in a similar situation to players on the modern picture-frame stage:¹⁹ they readily could have convinced the spectators of their ability to detect the approach of newcomers out of the corners of their eyes, thereby justifying any stage movement necessary for them to make before the completion of the entrance. So that of the fourteen entrances in the *Henry IV* plays to the already occupied "tavern" (which the furniture and dialogue²⁰ seem to establish as one of the two inner stages), for illustration, but one²¹ is preceded by an entrance announcement. And in the dramatist's other plays entrances which the presence of furnishings and the situation (not always proof, to be sure) seem to reveal as having taken place on one of the two inner stages²² go unannounced.

But whether the dramatist chose from time to time, for dramatic effectiveness, to accompany entrances on an inner stage (or those heralded by sound effects) with announcements has little to do, really, with the conclusion that the convention of the entrance announcement, now outmoded, as purely a stage-craft device was beautifully fitted, in Shakespeare at least, to the physical peculiarities of the outer platform of his public playhouse.

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¹⁷ Where the enterer appears on the balcony with the occupants on the lower, outer platform (e.g., *Romeo and Juliet* II. ii. 2 and *Richard II* III. iii. 62), the case, of course, is altogether different.

¹⁸ *The Globe Playhouse*, p. 171.

¹⁹ The Elizabethan inner stage, of course, had what must have amounted to a proscenium arch. Also, it will be remembered that through a gradual evolution the inner stage of that time has now become our main stage and the Elizabethan outer platform, our apron—the space from the front curtain to the footlights.

²⁰ For example, at 1 *Henry IV* II. iv. 576, Peto notes that Falstaff is fast asleep "behind the arras," a location at the rear of the inner stage; and at 2 *Henry IV* II. iv. 74, a drawer announces that Ancient Pistol is "below," which could mean that the tavern is really the upper inner stage, or balcony.

²¹ 1 *Henry IV* II. iv. 358.

²² See, for example, *Richard III* V. iii. 207 (Ratcliff enters Richard's tent); *The Merchant of Venice* II. v. 9 (Jessica enters a room in Shylock's house, evidently the balcony stage because afterwards she re-enters above, to be serenaded by Lorenzo); *Othello* IV. ii. 23, 92, and 109 (Emilia and Desdemona, Emilia alone, and Emilia and Iago, respectively, enter Desdemona's bedchamber); *Coriolanus* IV. v. 4 (Coriolanus enters Aufidius' "house" after having asked a citizen where it is located).

Love's Labour's Lost

BOBBYANN ROESEN



N a sense the play has ended; an epilogue has been spoken by Berowne and that haunting and beautiful kingdom created by the marriage of reality with illusion destroyed, seemingly beyond recall. In the person of Marcade, the world outside the circuit of the park has at last broken through the gates, involving the people of the play in its sorrows and grim actualities, the plague-houses and desolate retreats, the mourning cities and courts of that vaster country overshadowing the tents and the fantastic towers of Navarre. Yet before the final dissolution of that minute and once isolated kingdom of the play, when some of the characters seem already to have disappeared and the others are preparing sadly to journey into the realms beyond the walls of the royal close, there is granted suddenly a little moment of grace. In the waning afternoon, all the people of the play return to the stage and stand quietly together to hear the song which "the two learned men have compiled in praise of the Owl and the Cuckoo," a song into which the whole of that now-vanished world of *Love's Labour's Lost* seems to have passed, its brilliance, its strange mingling of the artificial and the real, its loveliness and laughter gathered together for the last time to speak to us in the form of a single strain of music.

When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight . . .

It is the landscape of the royal park that lies outstretched before us, a little world of thickets and smooth lawns, meadows and wooded hills. In the foreground, their appearance and speech as decorative and charming as the setting in which they have met to solemnize their vows of asceticism and study, stand four young men, Berowne, Dumain, Longaville, and that ruler of Navarre whose slender kingdom of foresters and dairy-maids, courtiers, pedants, and fools seems bounded by the park and its single, rustic village. Mannered and artificial, reflecting an Elizabethan delight in patterned and intricate language, Navarre's lines at the beginning of the play are nevertheless curiously urgent and intense.

Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live regist'red upon our brazen tombs,
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
Th' endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge,
And make us heirs of all eternity.

With the King's first words, an expression of that peculiarly Renaissance relationship of the idea of Fame with that of Time and Death, a shadow darkens for a moment the delicate dream landscape of the park. Touched by this shadow, affected by its reality, the four central characters of *Love's Labour's Lost* enter the world of the play.

Fantastic and contrived as they are, those absurd vows to which the four friends commit themselves in the initial scene spring from a recognition of the tragic brevity and impermanence of life that is peculiarly Renaissance. For the people of the sixteenth century, the world was no longer the mere shadow of a greater Reality, the imperfect image of that City of God whose towers and golden spires had dominated the universe of the Middle Ages. While the thought of Death was acquiring a new poignancy in its contrast with man's increasing sense of the value and loveliness of life in this world, Immortality tended to become, for Renaissance minds, a vague and even a somewhat dubious gift unless it could be connected in some way with the earth itself, and the affairs of human life there. Thus there arose among the humanist writers of Italy that intense and sometimes anguished longing, voiced by Navarre at the beginning of *Love's Labour's Lost*, to attain "an immortality of glory, survival in the minds of men by the record of great deeds or of intellectual excellence. . . ." At the very heart of the plan for an Academe lies the reality of Death, the Renaissance desire to inherit, through remarkable devotion to learning, an eternity of Fame, and thus to insure some continuity of personal existence, however slight, against the ravages of "cormorant devouring Time."

It is obvious, however, from the very beginning of the play, that the Academe and the idea of immortality which it embodies must fail. Less remote and docile than Dumain and Longaville, existing upon a deeper level of reality within the play, the brilliant and sensitive Berowne, a Chorus character throughout, first realizes how unnatural the vows are, how seriously they trespass, despite their three-year limit, against the normal laws of life and reality. The paradox of the Academe and the reason why its failure is not only understandable but absolutely necessary lie in the fact that this elaborate scheme which intends to enhance life and extend it through Fame even beyond the boundaries of the grave would in reality, if successfully carried out, result in the limitation of life and, ultimately, in its complete denial. In their very attempt to retain hold upon life, the King and his companions, as Berowne alone understands, are cutting themselves off from it, from love, and the beauty of women, from all those simple sensuous pleasures of the world which have prompted the establishment of the Academe in the first place by making the "too much loved earth more lovely,"² and the thought of its loss in Death so unbearably grim.

Long before the appearance of those two delightful but sobering characters, Holofernes and Nathaniel, Berowne has seen the barrenness of learning that is divorced from life, the tragedy of those industrious men of science who find a name for every star in the western skies and yet "have no more profit of their shining nights / Than those that walk and wot not what they are." Even in the

¹ Nesca Robb, *Neoplatonism of the Italian Renaissance* (London, 1935), p. 45.

² Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie*, in *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Feuillerat (Cambridge, 1923), III, 8.

first scene of the play, before his love for Rosaline has made his perception deeper and more sensitive, Berowne realizes in some sense that the only way to deal with the bleak reality of Death and Time is to accept it, to experience as much of life's sensory loveliness as possible while the opportunity is still given. Implicit in his earliest lines is the knowledge, related somehow to the first group of the "Sonnets," that "we cannot cross the cause why we were born," and although he agrees at last to take the oath, it is through him that we first sense the conviction expressed by the play as a whole that this idea of intellectual glory is an essentially sterile one, that the price exacted is too great to pay for a fame and a memory on earth that will soon be lost in the unimagined reaches of Time.

It was one of Walter Pater's most famous dictums that "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music,"³ and in his beautiful essay on "Shakespeare's English Kings" he asserted more particularly that "into the unity of a choric song the perfect drama ever tends to return, its intellectual scope deepened, complicated, enlarged, but still with an unmistakable singleness, or identity, in its impression on the mind."⁴ Such a unity is evident throughout *Love's Labour's Lost*, and, indeed, the quality of the whole is very much that of a musical composition, an inexorable movement forward, the appearance and reappearance in the fabric of the play of certain important themes, forcing the harmony into a series of coherent resolutions consistent with each other and with the drama as a whole. Berowne has scarcely finished speaking before his assertion that "every man with his affects is born, / Not by might mast'red, but by special grace" is echoed in the structure of the comedy itself, with the entrance of Constable Dull and the reluctant Costard, the first to disobey the edicts of the new Academe.

The little episode which follows is not only significant of the trend of future action but, in itself, one of the most delightful moments of the play. As the King reads Armado's incredible accusation and Costard tries feebly to avert impending doom by making Navarre laugh, it becomes obvious for the first time how much enchantment the play holds for the ear, how subtly it combines highly individual idioms of speech into a single conversation. *Love's Labour's Lost* is a play of many voices, and much of its beauty grows from the sheer music of their rise and fall, the exploitation of their differences of quality and tone, accent and complication. Here in the first scene, the frank simplicity of Dull, the awed monosyllables of Costard, are placed by Shakespeare in a deliberate musical relationship with the studied sentences of Longaville, the fantastic style of Armado, and the more attractive elegance of Berowne, and the whole episode is given the quality of a polyphonic composition half artificial and half real.

Beyond its humor and fascination of language, the Costard scene has, of course, a more serious purpose in the play, a purpose virtually identical with that fulfilled by a scene in *Measure for Measure*. In the later comedy, Angelo appears in the opening scene of the second act in a role analogous to Navarre's in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and the old counsellor Escalus in one similar to Berowne's. The scheme of justice which Angelo would enforce in Vienna is

³ Walter Pater, "The School of Giorgione," in *The Renaissance* (New York, n.d.), p. 111.

⁴ Pater, "Shakespeare's English Kings," in *Appreciations* (London, 1901), pp. 203-204.

as ridiculously inflexible, as ignorant of the nature of human beings as Navarre's Academe, and it is protested by Escalus. Not, however, until the sudden entrance of Constable Elbow, an Austrian cousin of Dull's, and Pompey, who can in some measure be compared to Costard, does it become completely obvious how impractical the system is, how helpless its high-minded idealism when forced to deal with real individuals, their private standards of morality and unpredictable human weaknesses. The fate of Angelo's justice is settled even before he himself has sinned against it, in the process of that riotous contention between Elbow, Froth, and Pompey, and in the same way, Navarre's Academe has failed before he and his friends are actually forsown, from the moment that the real and intensely individual figures of Costard and Dull appear in their respective roles as transgressor and upholder. Among the lower social levels of the park, life itself destroys the King's scheme almost in the moment of its foundation.

Walter Pater found *Love's Labour's Lost* particularly charming in its changing "series of pictorial groups, in which the same figures reappear, in different combinations but on the same background,"⁵ a composition, for him, like that of some ancient tapestry, studied, and not a little fantastic. The grouping of the characters into scenes would appear, however, to have been dictated by a purpose far more serious than the mere creation of such patterns; it is one of the ways in which Shakespeare maintains the balance of the play world between the artificial and the real, and indicates the final outcome of the comedy.

There are, of course, huge differences in the reality of the people who walk and speak together within the limits of the royal park. From the artificial and virtually indistinguishable figures of Dumain and Longaville, never really more than fashionable voices, the scale of reality rises gradually towards Berowne, in whom the marriage of a certain remote and fantastic quality with the delightful realism which first recognized the flaws in the Academe reflects the comedy as a whole, and reaches its apogee in the utter substantiality and prosaic charm of Constable Dull, who could never in any sense be accused of retreating into unreality, or affecting an elegant pose. Again and again, characters from different levels along this scale are grouped into scenes in a manner that helps to maintain the delicate balance of the play world; thus, in the first scene, with the incredible idea of the Academe and the sophisticated dialogue of Berowne and Longaville, Costard and the bewildered Dull are employed in much the same way that the mocking voice of the cuckoo is in the glowing spring landscape of the closing song, to keep the play in touch with a more familiar and real world, as well as to indicate the ultimate victory of reality over artifice and illusion.

As the first act ends, this theme is repeated again, and the inevitability of future events made even more clear with the abandonment of the edicts of the Academe by the very individual who was responsible for the deliverance of Costard into the righteous hands of Dull, the intense and serious Armado. The grave figure of the Spanish traveller is one of the most interesting and in a sense enigmatic to appear in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and his sudden love for Jaquenetta certainly the strangest of the five romances which develop within the park. Like Berowne, Armado is a very real person who is playing a part,

⁵ Pater, "Love's Labour's Lost," in *Appreciations*, p. 163.

but in his case it is far more difficult to separate the actor from the man underneath, and the pose itself is more complex than the fashionable role of Berowne. Even in his soliloquies, Armado seems to be acting to some invisible audience, and it is only in one moment at the end of the play that we are granted a glimpse of the man without the mask.

Romantic and proud, intensely imaginative, he has retreated into illusion much further than has Berowne, creating a world of his own within the world of the park, a world peopled with the heroes of the past, Samson and Hercules, Hector and the knights of Spain. Somehow, it is among these long-dead heroes that Armado really exists, rather than among the people of the play itself, and his bizarre language, so strange and artificial when placed beside the homely speech of Costard, was created for that remote, imaginative environment and possesses there a peculiar beauty and aptness of its own. A character with some of the isolation of Jaques, always separated from the gibes and chatter of Moth, he falls in love with Jaquenetta without accepting her as the real country-wench she is, but creates a little drama about the object of his passion in which his is the central role, and Jaquenetta appears in any likeness that he pleases, Delilah or Deianira. The illusion in which the real character of Armado lives has its own beauty and charm, but as the play progresses it becomes evident that this illusion is not strong enough to withstand the pressure of reality and must in the end be destroyed.

With the coming into the King's park of the Princess of France and her companions a new stage in the development of *Love's Labour's Lost* has been reached, and a theme we have not heard before begins slowly to rise in the musical structure of the play. Before the arrival of the ladies, it has been made clear that the Academe must fail, and it is no surprise when in the opening scene of the second act we find each of the four friends stealing back alone after the initial meeting to learn the name of his love from the obliging Boyet. As life itself breaks swiftly through the artificial scholarship of the court, the vitality of the play rises to an amazing height; the Academe is kept constantly before us, the reasons for its failure elaborated and made more plain, but at the same time, while the world of the royal park becomes more and more delightful, while masque and pageantry, sensuous beauty and laughter flower within the walls, it becomes slowly obvious that more than the Academe will be destroyed by the entrance of the ladies. Not only its scholarship, but the entire world of the play, the balance of artifice and reality of which it was formed, must also be demolished by forces from without the walls.

The Princess and her little retinue represent the first penetration of the park by the normal world beyond, a world composed of different and colder elements than the fairy-tale environment within. Through them, in some sense, the voice of Reality speaks, and although they seem to fit perfectly into the landscape of the park, indulge in highly formal, elaborate skirmishes of wit with each other and with the men, they are somehow detached from this world of illusion and artificiality in a way that none of its original inhabitants are. The contrived and fashionable poses which they adopt are in a sense less serious, more playful than those of the other characters, and they are conscious all the time, as even Berowne is not, that these attitudes are merely poses, and that Reality is something quite different. With them into the park they bring

past time and a disturbing reminder of the world outside, and from them come the first objective criticisms which pass beyond the scheme of the Academe to attack the men who have formed it. Maria, remembering Longaville as she saw him once before in Normandy, criticizes in her first speech the unreality with which the four friends have surrounded themselves, and points out for the first time in the play the danger of attitudes which develop without regard for the feelings of others, of wit that exercises itself thoughtlessly upon all.

In the wit of the ladies themselves, it is a certain edge of reality, an uncompromising logic, which cuts through the pleasant webs of artifice, the courtly jests and elaborations in the humor of the men, and emerges victorious with an unfailing regularity. Unlike the women, the King and his companions play, not with facts themselves, but with words, with nice phrases and antithetical statements, and when their embroidered language itself has been attacked, their courteous offers disdained as mere euphemisms, they can only retire discomfited. Even Berowne is utterly defeated when he approaches Rosaline with his graceful conceits.

Ber. Lady, I will commend you to mine own heart.
Ros. Pray you, do my commendations;
I would be glad to see it.
Ber. I would you heard it groan.
Ros. Is the fool sick?
Ber. Sick at the heart.
Ros. Alack, let it blood.
Ber. Would that do it good?
Ros. My physic says "ay."

Witty as Berowne, as agile of mind, Rosaline attacks his conventional protestations with a wit based on realism, a ridicule springing from a consciousness of the absurdity of artifice. That Berowne could be expressing a real passion in these artificial terms never enters her mind; he is merely mocking her, and she defends herself in the most effective way she can.

Berowne is, however, like the King, Dumain, and Longaville, suddenly and genuinely in love. The Academe has been thoroughly demolished and now, in the fourth act, Shakespeare introduces, in the characters of Holofernes and Nathaniel, reminders of what such a scheme might have led to, examples of the sterility of learning that is unrelated to life. As usual, Dull, surely the most delightful of that illustrious Shakespearian series of dim-witted but officious representatives of constabulary law, appears with them as the realistic element in the scene, the voice of the cuckoo which mocks, unconsciously, the intricate speech of the two pedants. Bewildered as usual, Dull shows here a quality of stubbornness we had not quite expected in him, maintaining stolidly against the fantastic perorations of Holofernes and Nathaniel that the deer killed by the Princess was "not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket." It is one of the most charming of his infrequent appearances, matched only by that little scene later in the play in which, utterly stupefied by the conversation which he has endured from Holofernes and Nathaniel at dinner, he sits mute and quiescent through all the arrangements for the pageant of the Nine Worthies, only at the very last, when roused by another character, entering the dialogue at all to offer

us a personal performance upon the tabor, a talent as engaging and unexpected in Dull as song is in the Justice Silence of *2 Henry IV*.

Unlike Dull, the schoolmaster and the curate are in some sense mere types, elements of a satire, but Shakespeare is after all not writing a treatise, and even though their absurdity is emphasized, the two have a certain charm of their own, and their interminable quibblings a faint and grotesque beauty. On a lower, less refined level, they reflect the love of words themselves that is visible throughout the play, reveling, not like Armado in the romance and wonder of the past, but in Latin verbs and bits of forgotten erudition, spare and abstract. As Moth says, "They have been at a great feast of languages and stol'n the scraps," and in their conversation the wisdom of ages past appears in a strangely mutilated form, the life drained from it, curiously hap-hazard and remote.

When in the third scene of Act Four, Berowne appears alone on the stage, we move from the two pedants to a higher level of reality, but one in which artifice is still present. Berowne's love for Rosaline is becoming increasingly intense, and although he seems at first only to be adopting another pose, that of melancholy lover, he is slowly becoming, as the play progresses, a more convincing and attractive figure, and his love more real.

By heaven, I do love; and it hath taught me to rhyme and to be melancholy;
and here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath
one of my sonnets already; the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady
hath it; sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady.

Often, beneath ornament and convention the Elizabethans disguised genuine emotion. Berowne's love for Rosaline is as sincere as Philip Sidney's for Stella, his longing as real as that of the unknown Elizabethan lover in Nicholas Hillarde's strangest and most haunting miniature who stands in the attitude of a familiar poetic conceit, gaunt and disheveled, against a background of flames.

The episode which follows Berowne's introductory soliloquy is, of course, one of the finest in the entire play. It is the first of three scenes in *Love's Labour's Lost* which possess the quality of a play within the play, formal in construction, somehow contrived, always beautifully handled. Here, above the whole scene, Berowne acts as spectator and as Chorus, establishing the play atmosphere in his various asides, crying out upon the entrance of Longaville, "Why, he comes in like a perjure, wearing papers," or in a more general affirmation,

"All hid, all hid"—an old infant play,
Like a demigod here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'er-eye.

Throughout *Love's Labour's Lost*, the play is a symbol of illusion, of unreality, as it is in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and here it is employed to render the artificiality, the convenient but obvious device of having each of the four lovers appear alone upon the stage, read aloud the poem addressed to his lady, and step aside for the advance of the next one, not only acceptable, but completely delightful. In this play environment, a level of unreality beyond that of the comedy as a whole, the multiple discoveries are perfectly convincing,

and the songs and sonnets read by the lovers the charming testimonies of a passion that is not to be questioned.

Through the comments of the spectator, Berowne, the scene is still, however, kept in touch with reality. From his wonderful, rocketing line upon the entrance of the King, "Shot, by heaven!" to the moment when he steps from his concealment in all the splendor of outraged virtue, Berowne's role is again analogous to that of the cuckoo in the closing song, mocking the lovers "enamelling with pied flowers their thoughts of gold,"⁶ maintaining the balance of the play. When he actually appears among his shamefaced friends to chide them for this "scene of fool'ry," the play within the play ends, as the spectator becomes actor, and we return, with his beautifully sanctimonious sermon, to the more usual level of reality.

The sheer delight of the scene rises now towards its peak as, only a few lines after the close of the play scene, another and even more effective climax is built up. Costard appears with Berowne's own sonnet written to Rosaline, and suddenly the play rises into magnificence. "Guilty, my lord, guilty. I confess, I confess." Berowne has become more real and brilliant than ever before, and at the same time, his speech attains a power and a radiance new in the comedy, an utterance still fastidious, still choice, but less self-conscious, as he sums up for Navarre, Dumain, and Longaville all that Shakespeare has been saying long before, in the Costard scene, in the fall from grace of Don Armado.

Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O let us embrace!
As true we are as flesh and blood can be.
The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
Young blood doth not obey an old decree.
We cannot cross the cause why we were born,
Therefore of all hands must be we forsworn.

Following these lines, there is a deliberate slackening of intensity, and the scene descends for a moment into a completely artificial duel of wits among the King, Berowne, and Longaville, on a somewhat hackneyed conceit. Berowne's toying with the various meanings of dark and light is as artificial and contrived as anything we have heard from him earlier in the play, but from these lines the scene suddenly rises to its final climax in that speech justifying the breaking of the vows, which is without doubt the most beautiful in the entire play. "Have at you then, affection's men-at-arms." Finally and completely, the Academe has crumbled, and it is Berowne, as is perfectly proper, who sums up all that the play has been saying up to this point in his exquisite peroration upon earthly love.

"Other slow arts entirely keep the brain, / And therefore, finding barren practisers, / Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil." Holofernes and Nathaniel are indirectly brought before us, the symbols of learning divorced from life, and having thus disposed of scholarship, Berowne passes on to speak of Love itself, and the task of justifying his own perjury and that of his three friends. Gradually, his speech rises to a lyrical height unequalled in the rest of the play, his customary eloquence and delicacy of language transfigured and made

⁶ Sidney, "Astrophel and Stella, Sonnet III," in *Silver Poets of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Bullett (London, 1947), p. 173.

splendid, the sincerity perfectly blended with the surviving mannerism. "And when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods / Make heaven drowsy with the harmony." With these two lines, the final climax of the scene has been reached, lines of an almost incredible beauty, sensuous and languid, their exact meaning a little puzzling perhaps, but communicating all that is necessary, in a realm beyond precise explanation.

After these lines, the speech loses something of its beauty, but its intensity remains and fires the King, Dumain, and Longaville. The action flares up suddenly in great, vibrant lines; "Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?" "Saint Cupid, then! and, soldiers, to the field," and in a whirlwind of vitality and excitement the scene moves towards its close. "For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours, / Forerun fair Love, strewing her way with flowers." Yet, as is customary with Shakespeare, the scene ends quietly, with two thoughtful, foreboding lines which are prophetic of what is to come in the next act. As though he turned back for a second, musingly, in the act of going off with the others, Berowne, as Chorus, remarks more to himself and that deserted little glade which was the scene of the play within the play than to his retreating friends, "Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn; / If so, our copper buys no better treasure," lines which despite their apparent gaiety are curiously disturbing.

With the beginning of that long, last act, a turning point in the action of the play has been reached. The Academe defeated by life itself on all levels of the park, one might expect that *Love's Labour's Lost* would move now, as *Much Ado About Nothing* does in its final act, into an untroubled close, a romantic ending like that of the Beatrice-Benedick plot. As we have in some sense been told by the title, and by the comments of the ladies, such an ending is, in this case, impossible. From the Academe theme the play turns now to the destruction of the half-real world within the royal park, a destruction which, in the actual moment in which it is accomplished, is unexpected and shocking, and yet has been prepared for and justified by previous events within the comedy. As we enter the Fifth Act, shadows begin to fall across the play world. Life within the park, its brilliance and laughter, mounts higher and higher, yet it is the winter stanzas of the closing song that this act suggests, and a new darkness, a strange intensity forces the harmony of the play into unforeseen resolutions. Vanished now are the untroubled meadows of spring, and the landscape acquires a realism that is somehow a little harsh.

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul. . . .

With Act Five, the thought of Death enters the park. The play opened, of course, under the shadow of death, the great motivation of the Academe, but after that opening speech of Navarre's, it vanished altogether, never appearing again even in the imagery of the play until the entrance of the ladies. Significantly, it is they, the intruders from the outside world of reality, who first, in Act Three, bring death into the park itself. In this act, the Princess

kills a deer, but in the lines in which the hunt is spoken of, those of Holofernes and the Princess herself, the animal's death is carefully robbed of any disturbing reality. After Holofernes has told us how "The preyful Princess pierc'd and pricked / A pretty, pleasing pricket," the fate of the deer is as unreal as the wooded landscape over which it ran. It might just as well have sprung to its feet and gamboled off when the forester's back was turned.

Not until Act Five does the death image become real and disturbing, and even here, until the final entrance of Marcade, it is allowed to appear only in the imagery, or else in the recollection by some character of a time and a place beyond the scope of the play itself, the country of France where Katherine's sister died of her melancholy and longing, or that forgotten antiquity in which the bones of Hector were laid to rest. Appearing thus softened, kept in the background of the comedy, it is nevertheless a curiously troubling image, and as it rises slowly through the fabric of the play, the key of the entire final movement is altered. In the mask scene, Berowne, half-serious about his love and that of the King, Dumain, and Longaville, cries to the ladies,

Write "Lord have mercy on us" on those three;
They are infected; in their hearts it lies;
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes.
These lords are visited; you are not free,
For the Lord's tokens on you I do see.

and while the image is playfully treated still, it is surely a curious and grotesque figure, this marriage of love, the symbol throughout the comedy of life itself, with death. One cannot imagine such an image appearing earlier in the play, before the outside world, the echoes of its great plague bells sounding through desolate streets, the lugubrious cries of the watchmen marking the doors of the infected houses, began to filter obscurely through the little kingdom of the park.

It is the tremendous reality of death which will destroy the illusory world of Navarre as thoroughly as the gentler forces of life destroyed the Academe and the artificial scheme it represented, earlier in the play. At the very beginning of the Fifth Act, it is made apparent why this must happen, why it is completely necessary for the world of the comedy, despite its beauty and grace, to be demolished. The Princess and her gentlewomen have been discussing the favors and the promises showered upon them by the King and his courtiers, laughing and mocking one another gently. Suddenly, the atmosphere of the entire scene is altered with a single, curious comment, a kind of overheard aside, made by Katherine, upon the real nature of Love. Rosaline turns to her, and as she remembers past time and a tragedy for which the god of Love was responsible then, the scene suddenly becomes filled with the presence of death.

Ros. You'll ne'er be friends with him: 'a kill'd your sister.

Kath. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died. Had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might have been a grandam ere she died.
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.

Against such a memory of the reality of love, the Princess and her three companions place the fantastic protestations of Navarre, Berowne, Dumain,

and Longaville. As we have seen, their love is genuine; it has made the character of Berowne immeasurably more attractive, caused him no little anguish of spirit, created that great speech of his at the end of Act Four. Beneath the delicate language, the elegance and the gaiety, lies a real passion, but the women from the world outside, where love has been coupled for them with death and reality, see only artifice and pose. The artificiality which has become natural to the four friends and the environment in which they live holds them from the accomplishment of their desire, for the ladies, hearing from Boyet of the masque in which their lovers intend to declare themselves, are unable to perceive in the scheme anything but attempted mockery, and in defending themselves, frustrate the serious purpose of the entertainment.

They do it but in mocking merriment,
And mock for mock is only my intent. . . .
There's no such sport as sport by sport o'erthrown,
To make theirs ours, and ours none but our own;
So shall we stay, mocking intended game,
And they well mock'd depart away with shame.

This masque scene is, of course, the second of the plays within the play, less delightful than the one before it, but immensely significant, the part of audience and commentator played in this instance by Boyet. As usual, the men are completely defeated by the ladies, the delicate fabric of their wit and artifice destroyed by the realistic humour of their opponents. Berowne, approaching the supposed Rosaline with a courteous request, "White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee," is mercilessly rebuffed by the Princess—"Honey, and milk, and sugar; there is three"—and the charming illusion of the masque itself ruined by the satiric comments of Boyet who, unlike Berowne in the earlier play scene, actually insinuates himself into the unreal world of the entertainment, and totally upsets it.

Even when the exposure is complete and the men have asked pardon from their loves, the women think only that they have defeated a mocking jest directed against them, not that they have prevented their lovers from expressing a genuine passion. For the first time, Berowne reaches utter simplicity and humbleness in his love; his declaration to Rosaline at the end of the masque scene is touching and deeply sincere, but for her, this passion is still unbelievable, a momentary affectation, and she continues to mock her lover and the sentiments he expresses.

Ber. I am a fool, and full of poverty.
Ros. But that you take what doth to you belong,
It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue.
Ber. O, I am yours, and all that I possess.
Ros. All the fool mine?

More sensitive, gifted with a deeper perception of reality than his companions, Berowne seems to guess what is wrong, and he forswears "Taffetà phrases, silken terms precise, / Three pil'd hyperboles, spruce affectation, / Figures pedantical . . .," at least to Rosaline, but the rejection itself is somewhat artificial, and he remains afterwards with more than "a trick of the old rage."

The masque has failed, and Berowne's more direct attempt to announce to the ladies the purpose behind the performance and detect in them an answering passion has been turned away by the unbelieving Princess. At this point, Costard enters to announce that Holofernes and Nathaniel, Moth and Armado are at hand to present the pageant of the Nine Worthies, and the third and last of the plays within the play begins. As we enter this play scene, the vitality and force of the comedy reaches its apogee, but in its laughter there rings now a discordant note that we have not heard before. The actors themselves are, after all, no less sincere than Bottom and his troupe in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and they are a great deal more sensitive and easy to hurt. They are real people whose intentions are of the very best, their loyalty to their King unquestioned, and although their performance is unintentionally humorous, one would expect the audience to behave with something of the sympathy and forbearance exhibited by Duke Theseus and the Athenians.

The only civil members of the audience in *Love's Labour's Lost*, however, are the ladies. The Princess cannot resist one sarcasm upon the entrance of Armado, but it is addressed quietly to Berowne, before the play itself begins, while Armado is engrossed with the King and obviously does not hear. Thereafter, every one of her comments to the players is one of interest or pity: "Great thanks, great Pompey," "Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited," "Speak, brave Hector; we are much delighted." The players have only the Princess to appeal to in the storm of hilarity which assails them, and it is only she, realistic as she is, who understands that a play is an illusion, that it is to be taken as such and respected in some sense for itself, regardless of its quality. Like Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she realizes somehow that "the best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them,"⁷ and when she addresses the players she is wise and sensitive enough to do so not by their own names, which she has read on the playbill, but by the names of those whom they portray, thus helping them to sustain that illusion which is the very heart of a play.

In contrast to that of the Princess, the behaviour of the men is incredibly unattractive, particularly that of Berowne. It is difficult to believe that this is the same man who spoke so eloquently a short time ago about the soft and sensible feelings of love, and promised Rosaline to mend his ways. Costard manages to finish his part before the deluge, and Nathaniel, although unkindly treated, is not personally humiliated. Only with the appearance of Holofernes as Judas Maccabaeus and Armado as Hector is the full force of the ridicule released, and it is precisely with these two characters that the infliction of abuse must be most painful. Costard, after all, is a mere fool; he takes part in the baiting of the others with no compunction at all, and Nathaniel throughout the comedy has been little more than a foil for Holofernes, but the village pedagogue is a more sensitive soul, and not at all unsympathetic.

Holofernes has his own reality, his own sense of the apt and the beautiful which, though perverse, is meaningful enough for him, and it is exceedingly painful to see him stand here on the smooth grass of the lawn, his whole subjective world under merciless attack, a storm of personal epithets exploding about him.

⁷ *A Midsummer Night's Dream* V. i.

Dum. The head of a bodkin.
Ber. A death's face in a ring
Long. The face of an old Roman coin, scarce seen.
Boyet The pommel of Caesar's falchion.
Dum. The carv'd bone face on a flask.
Ber. Saint George's half-cheek in a brooch.

The laughter is unattractive, wild, and somehow discordant, made curiously harsh by the introduction of Berowne's "death's face," and it has little resemblance to the laughter which we have heard in the play before this, delicate, sophisticated, sometimes hearty, but never really unkind. When Holofernes cries at the last, "This is not generous, not gentle, not humble," he becomes a figure of real dignity and stature, restrained and courteous in the face of the most appalling incivility.

Meanwhile, around the pedagogue and his little audience the afternoon has been waning slowly into evening, long shadows falling horizontally across the lawn, and Boyet calls after the retreating Holofernes in a strangely haunting line, "A light for Monsieur Judas. It grows dark, he may stumble." A kind of wildness grips all the men, and though Dumain says in a weird and prophetic line, "Though my mocks come home by me, I will now be merry," Armado faces a jeering throng even before he has begun to speak. Of all the players, Armado is the one for whom we have perhaps the most sympathy. He is a member of the court itself, has had some reason to pride himself upon the King's favor, and has been good enough to arrange the pageant in the first place. The people represented in it are those who inhabit that strange world of his fancy, and one knows that his anguish is not alone for his personal humiliation, but for that of the long-dead hero he portrays, when he cries, "The sweet war-man is dead and rotten; sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried; when he breathed, he was a man." A little grotesque, as Armado's sentences always are, the line is nevertheless infinitely moving in its summoning up of great spaces of time, its ironic relation to the idea of immortality through fame expressed in the opening speech of the comedy. Not since the reference to Katherine's sister have we had such a powerful and disturbing image of death brought before us, death real and inescapable although still related to a world and a time beyond the play itself.

In the remaining moments of the play scene, the hilarity rises to its climax, a climax becoming increasingly harsh. During the altercation between Costard and Armado which results from Berowne's ingenious but unattractive trick, images of death begin to hammer through the fabric of the play. The painfulness of the realism grows as Armado, poor, but immensely proud, is finally shamed and humbled before all the other characters. For the first time in the play, the mask falls from Armado's face, and the man beneath it is revealed, his romanticism, his touching personal pride, the agony for him of the confession that in his poverty he wears no shirt beneath his doublet. Still acting, he tries feebly to pass off this lack as some mysterious and romantic penance, but the other characters know the truth; Armado knows they do, and the knowledge is intensely humiliating. The illusion of the rôle he has played throughout *Love's Labour's Lost* is destroyed for others as well as for himself, and he stands miserably among the jeers of Dumain and Boyet while complete reality breaks

over him, and the little personal world which he has built up around himself so carefully shatters at his feet.

The other people in the play are so concerned with Armado's predicament that no one notices that someone, in a sense Something has joined them. His entrance unremarked by any of the other characters, materializing silently from those shadows which now lie deep along the landscape of the royal park, the Messenger has entered the play world.

Mar. I am sorry, madam, for the news I bring
Is heavy in my tongue. The King your father—
Prin. Dead, for my life!
Mar. Even so; my tale is told.

There is perhaps nothing like this moment in the whole range of Elizabethan drama. In the space of four lines the entire world of the play, its delicate balance of reality and illusion, all the hilarity and overwhelming life of its last scene has been swept away and destroyed, as Death itself actually enters the park, for the first time, in the person of Marcade. Only in one Elizabethan madrigal, Orlando Gibbons' magnificent "What Is Our Life?" is there a change of harmony and mood almost as swift and great as this one, and it occurs under precisely the same circumstances, the sudden appearance among the images of life in Raleigh's lyric of "the graves that hide us from the searching sun"⁸ the memory of the inescapable and tremendous reality of Death.⁹

Clumsy, as one always is in the presence of sudden grief, the King can think of nothing to say but to ask the Princess "How fares your Majesty?" a question to which she, from the depths of her sorrow and bewilderment, gives no reply, but prepares with the dignity characteristic of her to leave for France. Now, the men come forward uncertainly, and first the King and then Berowne, clinging still to a world no longer existing, attempt to express their love in terms which had been appropriate to that world, terms at first still incomprehensible to the women and then, at last, understood, but not altogether trusted.

As vows had begun the play, so vows end it. The King is assigned as his symbol of reality a "forlorn and naked hermitage" without the walls of the royal park, in the real world itself, in which he must try for a twelvemonth if this love conceived in the sunlit landscape of Navarre can persist in the colder light of actuality. For Dumain and Longaville, those shadowy figures, penances more vague but of a similar duration are assigned, and then at last, Berowne, shaken and moved to the depths of his being, inquires from Rosaline, who has been standing a little apart from the others, lost in thought,

Studies my lady? Mistress, look on me;
Behold the window of my heart, mine eye,
What humble suit attends thy answer there.
Impose some service on me for thy love.

Slowly, speaking with great care, Rosaline answers, and in the strangest

⁸ Sir Walter Raleigh, "What Is Our Life?", *Silver Poets of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 296.

⁹ Wilfrid Mellers, in a series of lectures given on "Elizabethan and Jacobean Music," Stratford-upon-Avon, July, 1952.

and most grotesque of the penances, Berowne is condemned to haunt the hospitals and plague-houses of the world outside the park, to exercise his wit upon the "speechless sick," and try the power of his past role, the old artificiality that had no concern for the feelings of others, that humiliated Armado in the play scene, the careless mocks of the old world, upon the reality of the ailing and the dying. "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear / Of him that hears it, never in the tongue / Of him that makes it." It was this reality of actual living that Berowne was unconscious of when he led the unthinking merriment of the play scene just past. Yet, at the end of the year, love's labors will be won for Berowne, and he will receive Rosaline's love, not in the half real world of the park, but in the actuality outside its walls. Thus the play which began with a paradox, that of the Academe, closes with one as well. Only through the acceptance of the reality of Death are life and love in their fullest sense made possible for the people of the play.

The world of the play past has now become vague and unreal, and it is not distressing that Berowne, in a little speech that is really a kind of epilogue, should refer to all the action before the entrance of Marcade, the people who took part in that action and the kingdom they inhabited and in a sense created, as having been only the elements of a play. It is a play outside which the characters now stand, bewildered, a little lost in the sudden glare of actuality, looking back upon that world of mingled artifice and reality a trifle wistfully before they separate in the vaster realm beyond the royal park. Through *Love's Labour's Lost*, the play has been a symbol of illusion, of delightful unreality, the masque of the Muscovites, or the pageant of the Nine Worthies, and now it becomes apparent that there was a further level of illusion above that of the plays within the play. The world of that illusion has enchanted us; it has been possessed of a haunting beauty, the clear loveliness of those landscapes in the closing song, but Shakespeare insists that it cannot take the place of reality itself, and should not be made to. Always, beyond the charming, frost-etched countryside of the pastoral winter, like the background of some Flemish Book of Hours, lies the reality of the greasy kitchen-maid and her pot, a reality which must sooner or later break through and destroy the charm of the artificial and the illusory.

For us, however, knowing how Shakespeare's later work developed, and how the play image itself took on another meaning for him, there is a strange poignancy in this closing moment, with its confident assertion of the concrete reality of the world into which the characters are about to journey, the necessity for them to adjust themselves to that reality. Later, in *As You Like It* and *Hamlet* Shakespeare would begin to think of the play as the symbol, not of illusion, but of the world itself and its actuality, in *Macbeth* and *King Lear* as the symbol of the futility and tragic nature of that actuality, "that great stage of fools."¹⁰ Yet he must always have kept in mind the image as it had appeared years before in the early comedy of *Love's Labour's Lost*, for returning to it at the very last, he joined that earlier idea of the play as illusion with its later meaning as a symbol of the real world, and so created the final play image of *The Tempest* in which illusion and reality have become one and the same, and

¹⁰ *King Lear* IV. vi.

there is no longer any distinction possible between them. The world itself into which Berowne and his companions travel to seek out reality will become for Shakespeare at the last merely another stage, a play briefly enacted,

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.¹¹

¹¹ *The Tempest* IV. i.

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"God's" or "gods'" in *King Lear*, V. iii. 17

T. M. PARROTT



HE reviewer of J. A. K. Thomson's *Shakespeare and the Classics* (*Times Literary Supplement*, July 11, 1952) challenged the author's assertion that in *King Lear* Shakespeare never speaks of God, but only of the gods, and charged him with ignoring "the apparent singular in V. iii. 17." The word "apparent" was well chosen for in the text of all modern editions that I have examined the line in question appears as:

As if we were God's spies,

where the penultimate word undoubtedly appears as the genitive singular of "God."

Is this what Shakespeare meant?

The question of his meaning appears to be complicated by the appearance immediately thereafter, V. iii. 21, of the phrase "the gods" (Q and F "Gods") where the word certainly is plural and refers to the heathen deities. Should the word in line 17 be modernized "God's" or "gods'?"

The modernization of Shakespeare's original text is an attempt to make his meaning intelligible to the ordinary reader since only the scholar is qualified to extract it from the earliest copies. To this end a modern editor takes considerable liberties with the original: he brings the spelling up to date, changes capital letters to lower case to conform to modern usage, alters the punctuation to bring out the logical structure of the sentence, introduces apostrophes, where they seem to be needed, and so on. The change in modern editions of *Lear* from "Gods" to "God's" is such an attempt to clarify Shakespeare's meaning; to show that here the word was meant to refer to the one God. This has been done by the retention of the original capital G, while in all other lines in *Lear* where the word "gods" appears most modern editors print it with a lower case g. Furthermore, the introduction of the apostrophe, changing "Gods" to "God's," is a modernization meant to mark the word as a genitive singular in order to rectify the ambiguity of the original text, where "Gods" might be equivalent to *deorum* as well as to *Dei*, and thus to make Shakespeare's meaning clear and certain. Has it done so?

The best way to determine Shakespeare's meaning in any specific instance is to consult Shakespeare himself, not modern editors and commentators. A glance at a Shakespeare concordance shows that the word "gods" appears twenty-five times in *Lear*, but "god" never except in this one "apparent" instance.¹ In every case where the word appears it is printed in the First Folio with a capital G. Shakespeare allows the heathen deities a capital letter; most modern editors degrade them to lower case.

¹ An exception might perhaps be made for the compound word, "godson" (F *Godsonne*), II. i. 93. Here the word reveals an anachronism of the type not unusual in Shakespeare's plays. A heathen

This practice of discriminating between the one God and the heathen deities by what we may call "decapitalization" seems to have started with the compositor or the proofreader of the Second Folio. He begins where the word "gods" first occurs, I. i. 161, by using a lower case *g*, and keeps it up till he reaches II. i. 93, where he retains the original "Godsonne," apparently realizing that here the word implied a reference to the Christian God. He then resumes the practice, but he was not consistent, for twice, IV. vi. 29, and IV. vii. 14, he allowed the capital *G* of F1 to remain. Perhaps he was nodding here, but when he came to the passage in question he was wide awake, for he retained the Folio capital *G* in "Gods spies," line 17, but dropped it to lower case *g* in "the gods," line 21, thus making a distinct difference of meaning between the words. I have not been able to consult the Third Folio, but the Fourth in this line follows the Second exactly. So much for the old editions; we may note in passing that none of them use the apostrophe to mark the genitive case in V. iii. 17. (A consideration of the use of this mark of punctuation in Elizabethan printing follows later.)

Nicholas Rowe, the poet-playwright, 1674-1718, was the first to "edit" Shakespeare's plays, that is to present them to the public of his day in a readable, modernized form. Rowe based his text, 1709, upon that of the Fourth Folio, and we should therefore expect him to follow that in differentiating the words in line 17 and line 21. He does not, however, do so, but prints a capital *G* in both lines. Pope, the next editor, based his text, 1725, upon that of Rowe, but in this passage he must have consulted an original copy for, like F2 and F4, he has a capital *G* in line 17, but a lower case *g* in line 21. Theobald, who followed Pope, reverted to the First Folio, using a capital *G* in both lines in successive editions from 1733 till 1772 when a reprint of his edition reads "God's," line 17, and "gods," line 21. A survey of eighteenth-century editions in the Folger Shakespeare Library shows a constant variation of capitals and lower case letters in these lines until 1773 when the Johnson-Steevens edition reverted to the pattern Pope had set by printing "God's" (l.17) and "gods" (l.21). From that time on, so far as I know, this pattern has been followed, and all later editions discriminate between Lear's references to the one God in line 17 and to the heathen deities in line 21.

The use of a capital *G* in line 17 is not the only way in which modern editors mark the word as a genitive singular; even more decisive is their use of the apostrophe between *d* and *s*. This use is, of course, comparatively modern. Ben Jonson in his *English Grammar*, published in 1640, three years after his death, stated that the genitive singular of nouns of the first declension, i.e. those forming the plural by adding *s*, was the same as the nominative singular, thus nominative *father*, genitive *father* (Chapter XIII).² Jonson in his scornful disregard of contemporary usage based his statement on the practice of such earlier stand-

king who swears by Hecate, Apollo, and Jupiter should not be referred to as acting as godfather at the Christian ceremony of baptism. Like Homer, Shakespeare sometimes nods. Did he do so also when, at the very height of his power, he wrote Lear's speech to Cordelia? It seems unlikely, for in the continuation of this very speech he makes Lear refer to "the gods," V. iii. 21.

² Readers consulting Gifford's edition of Jonson will be misled, for this edition shows the forms: nominative *father*, genitive *father's*. Gifford unfortunately followed the 1693 F of Jonson's *Works* where the grammar was completely revised to bring it up to standard contemporary usage. Here we are told that "to the genitive case of nouns denoting a possessor is added 's with an apostrophe." The accurate reprint of Jonson's *Grammar* by Strickland Gibson, 1928, gives the true reading, in which, of course, there is no mention of an apostrophe.

ard English authors as Gower and Chaucer, from whose works he quotes repeatedly. Elizabethan writers, Shakespeare in particular, did not follow Jonson's alleged rule. I have counted about 20 cases of the genitive singular in the first act of *Hamlet*, as presented in Q2, presumably printed from Shakespeare's manuscript. Every instance shows the same ending in *s*; not a single one has an apostrophe. It is interesting to compare Shakespeare's usage with Jonson's example, for the genitive form *fathers* occurs repeatedly in this act.

It was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that the apostrophe to mark the genitive singular came gradually into use. I am informed that there are a few instances of its use in the *Third Folio*, 1663, and many more in the *Fourth*, 1685, though it may be noted that the *Fourth* does not use it in this particular line, but prints "Gods." By the time of *Rowe's edition*, 1709, most English printers used it. *Rowe* was the first to introduce it into this line, and he has been followed by all later editors with the sole exception of *Hammer*, 1744, who prints "Gods" (l.17) and "Gods" (l.21) thus avoiding all discrimination between the words. It may, of course, be a mere compositor's variant in this case. With this exception, then, it is safe to say that all editors from *Rowe* on have regarded the word as a genitive singular, implying, of course, a reference, for the one and only time in the play, to the one supreme God.

Probably one reason which has led editors to regard "Gods," line 17, as a genitive singular is the absence of the definite article "the" before it. One would expect, if the word referred to heathen deities, to find "the" here, as in line 21. This is a plausible but not a convincing argument. Abbott, *Shakespearean Grammar* (p.64), states that "Shakespeare often omits 'the' before a noun already qualified by another noun."¹⁸ If Shakespeare had been writing strictly logical prose in this passage he would—or should—have written either "the spies of God" or "the spies of the gods." Consideration of meter, and probably of haste, dictated the terse "Gods spies," which drops the article before both words. The ambiguity of the text needs to be resolved, as so often in Shakespeare, by the context before we can decide on the correct modernization of "Gods."

The context here includes both the situation and the speaker. To make what follows clear without the necessity of constant reference to an edition of *Lear*, the passage from line 3 to line 19 inclusive is here transcribed from the Kittredge edition (*Complete Works*, p. 1235):

Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison.
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage.
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues

⁸ A similar omission of the article before "gods" appears in *Troilus and Cressida*, III. ii. 164, when the word refers to the classical deities.

Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too—
 Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out—
 And take upon's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies; and we'll wear out,
 In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
 That ebb and flow by th' moon.

The situation is quite clear: Cordelia's attempt to restore her father to his throne has failed, and she and Lear are prisoners in the hands of the wicked sisters. She realizes the situation; her scornful query, "Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?" makes this plain, for certainly she did not mean to beg for mercy from the merciless pair; her tears, line 23, are for her father's certain fate at their hands. With Lear, the case is different. Bradley speaks of Lear's "serene renunciation of the world" at this point, but "serene" seems hardly the proper word to characterize Lear's temper here. We should bear in mind that this is the first time he has been with Cordelia since the recognition scene in which he came back to life, of which scene his words transcribed above are distinctly reminiscent.⁴

Has Lear quite regained his sanity? A distinguished physician commenting in the *Variorum Lear* on this passage answers in the negative, and Bradley himself doubts his complete "recovery." Certainly Lear does not grasp the situation; he seems unaware that a battle in his behalf has been fought and lost. He realizes indeed that he and Cordelia are going to prison, but to him that only means that he will there have the company of his best-loved, once lost, and now regained daughter. He seems, in fact, to look forward to a sort of captivity like that enjoyed by favored prisoners of state in Shakespeare's day, one in which they could receive friends and get news of the world's affairs. He expects to be happy in prison; he and Cordelia will pray and sing together, talk over the past, and gossip with visitors about present doings at Court. It is upon this sort of talk that lines 16-17 turn.

The "mystery of things" has, I think, been misunderstood by modern editors; W. J. Craig in the *Arden* edition, renders it "the mysterious course of worldly events," refers to Virgil's *rerum causas*, and even quotes a line from *Anactoria*, "The mystery of the cruelty of things," where Swinburne is plainly borrowing and altering Shakespeare's phrase. But is that really the meaning here?

There are two words "mystery" in English, one still in use, the other obsolete. The first, from the Greek *musterion*, means primarily a secret religious rite; it is in this sense that Shakespeare uses it when he makes Lear swear by "the mysteries of Hecate." It came later to mean in a more general way a secret, as, for example, when Hamlet tells his false friends that they would pluck out the heart of his mystery. Occasionally it took on a special meaning connected with court politics. Raleigh, for example, says "mysteries . . . of state are certain secret practices either for avoiding danger, etc.," and Sir Thomas Browne speaks of "Halfpoliticians maxims called mysteries of state." The other "mystery," the obsolete word, from medieval Latin *ministerium*, means a craft, a calling, a

⁴ The first time, at least, on the stage; what may have passed between father and daughter in the time-space between IV. vii and V. iii, we have no right to inquire; that interval is not part of the play.

profession. Properly this word should be spelled "mystery," and, in fact, Chaucer does so spell it in *The Parson's Tale*, but by Shakespeare's time spelling and in some cases meaning had been assimilated to the other word. Shakespeare knew and used this word; in *Measure for Measure*, IV. ii. 30 ff., it refers to the calling of a hangman; in *Timon*, IV. iii. 458, to that of a bandit; in *Othello*, IV. ii. 30, to that of a bawd. Which word is he using here?

The answer would seem to depend upon what meaning we attach to "things" in this same line. Hardly, I think, Craig's "mysterious course of worldly events."⁵ Lear is not looking forward to a serious talk with Cordelia about God's mysterious ways, rather to a quiet laugh at the "gilded butterflies," i.e. the gayly dressed courtiers, who have been visiting them.⁶ They will, Lear fancies, talk with their visitors about court news—"who's in, who's out"—and pretend to understand, "take upon's"—what? The answer surely must be what Raleigh called "mysteries of state—certain secret practices." This conclusion is strengthened by a parallel passage in *Troilus*, III. iii. 190 ff., a play written not long before and possibly performed at the Globe while Shakespeare was in the act of writing *Lear*. In this scene Ulysses tells Achilles that his love for one of Priam's daughters is known to the Greek chieftains. Achilles expresses his surprise at the discovery of what he thought was secret, but Ulysses answers:

The providence that's in a watchful state . . .
Keeps place with thought, and almost, like the gods,
Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.
There is a mystery . . .
in the soul of state.

And, he tells Achilles, it is by this "mystery" that "all the commerce" that he has had with Troy was made known in the proper quarters. The diction and, to some extent, the main idea, of this passage, was running in Shakespeare's head while he penned the lines under discussion in *Lear*.⁷ One cannot help feeling that Shakespeare was thinking in *Troilus* of the highly efficient secret service organized by Walsingham, through which "all the commerce" that Norfolk, for example, had had with Mary, Queen of Scots, was revealed to Elizabeth's Privy Council. Marlowe, Shakespeare's admired "dead shepherd," had played a part in this secret service and had been killed in a scuffle with a fellow informer.

If, then, we interpret "the mystery of things" as meaning the practices of the state secret service, we get a new light on the phrase "Gods spies." Shakespeare uses the word "spies" nearly always in the sense of "informers." There is a striking parallel to the *Lear* phrase in *The Winter's Tale*, V. i. 203, a play set like *Lear* in heathen times. Here Perdita exclaims: "The heaven sets spies upon us;" "heaven" here is evidently a collective noun for "the gods." The omniscient God of Christian theology needs no "spies," although a pious commentator, Dr. Johnson, tells us that "spies" here means "angels commissioned to survey and report the lives of men." The heathen deities, on the contrary, at times need human informers. Shakespeare would have learned this, if not at school, yet

⁵ "Mysterious," by the way, is a word that Shakespeare never uses.

⁶ We may note in passing that it is only here and in *Troilus*, III. iii. 78, that Shakespeare uses "butterfly" in a metaphorical sense; cf. "Waterfly," *Hamlet*, V. ii. 84.

⁷ I have to thank Dr. J. Duncan Spaeth for calling my attention to the *Troilus* scene.

certainly from Chapman's translation of *The Iliad*, which we know he had read. Here in Book I Achilles tells his goddess mother of the injury that Agamemnon has done him, and begs her to inform Zeus and to implore his aid.

A thoughtful reading of the passage in which the "apparent singular" occurs, in comparison with parallels elsewhere in Shakespeare, along with an understanding of the true meaning of "mystery" and of "spies," seems to lead to the inevitable conclusion that the original "Gods" of line 17 should be modernized "gods;" and that, in consequence, Professor Thomson was right when he asserted that Shakespeare never speaks of God in the essentially heathen play of *King Lear*.⁸

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⁸ Since this article was written I have seen Muir's revision, 1952, of Craig's edition of *King Lear*, and was pleased to see that he prints "Gods'" in l.17. In a note on the line he says he follows "Perrett in assuming that Shakespeare intended the plural since he was writing of a pagan world." "Perrett" is Wilfrid Perrett's *The Story of King Lear*, published in *Palaestra*, XXXV (1904), a much neglected, but most valuable study of this play.

Slander in Drama

E. E. STOLL

I

 O be plausible, slander successfully addressed to a noble, intelligent person, whether in drama or other story, requires, I think, a postulate as well as a supporting structure; and it is one of the strangest things in the history of Shakespeare criticism that the late illustrious Granville-Barker, amply recognizing the importance of the postulate in general, should, like nearly all the other critics dealing with *Othello* and Edgar, where it is explicit, entirely ignore it. Of Edmund's deception of Edgar and Gloster together he says that Shakespeare "asks us to allow him the fact even as we have allowed him Lear's partition of the kingdom"; and fifty-seven pages earlier, while defending the partition according to the daughters' avowals, he maintains that "a dramatist may postulate any situation that he has the means to interpret, if he will abide by the logic of it after." Still, on the page just before the remark about Gloster, in his case, at any rate, he does not himself allow Shakespeare the fact of Edmund's deception: "an egoist, and blind, knowing least of what he should know most, of his own two sons." Thus he nevertheless endeavors to interpret realistically, psychologically, not profiting by the postulate, in Edmund's own words:

A credulous father, and a brother noble
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none. (I. ii. 195-197)

just as afterwards, in *Othello*, he fails to profit by the similar postulate, in the words of Iago:

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so. . . . (I. iii. 405-406)

or by the supporting structure of the hero's manifestly merited reputation for a noble, not jealous nature and of the villain's as manifestly unmerited but unanimously accepted reputation for "honesty" (or integrity), with the merited reputation for sagacity to boot. Yet thereby the character of the Moor, though to the same effect, is still more securely safeguarded than that of Gloster or Edgar (who are but in the underplot), if only audience, reader, or critic will listen to the author and follow him, as, bent upon a "tragic fault," a critic does not.

This supporting structure counts, of course, but after the postulate: they are correlatives, and only a hero "that thinks men honest that but seem to be so" can in turn think the villain "honest" because to everybody else he seems to be

so and himself be not therefore something of a fool. And naturally, in consequence, Granville-Barker ignores this matter as well. Treating the situation of successful slander psychologically, realistically, he cannot consistently rely on the villain's reputation, for in real life Othello or Iago himself could not have done so, either. A reputation so importunate and resounding, for a virtue so negative and humble, both ordinarily and properly inconspicuous, would, as the villain first brings his arts to bear, if not indeed long before that, have been suspected and resented. It is like a great name for piety or sobriety, veracity or chastity, which the less remarked upon the better.

II

Professor G. I. Duthie (*Shakespeare*, 1951) has not been so wary; and likewise treating the situation realistically—ignoring the postulate, yet also, unlike the other critic, the tempter's skill—makes the Moor lend the villain his ear, on the other hand, simply because of the latter's "widespread [not his unanimous] reputation for integrity," in addition to the facts that only by him (strange reason!) "the idea of jealousy has been suggested" and that Desdemona has interceded in Cassio's behalf (p. 13). (Of this, more below; and the reputation for sagacity, like Granville-Barker, he ignores besides.) Thus, although elsewhere he too recognizes postulates (or "hypotheses," pp. 19-20, as in *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, where, however, these are not expressed) he is less "true to life" than the other critic and also to the text. Like him, though, he recognizes that the hero is "noble," "admittedly not naturally jealous," and therefore by no means inclined to believe a slanderer of his newly wedded wife and his dearest friend; nevertheless "in terms of real life" he finds "nothing improbable" about this "transition from non-jealousy to jealousy," and "good enough reason for Othello to feel inclined to believe Iago." "Not naturally jealous," yet jealous naturally, then; but in a play naturally still less by ignoring the postulate! In consequence, apparently himself a little uncertain about these "terms of real life" and the privileges of probability, he has recourse (frankly, without producing evidence, as in his discussion of some other plays) to the nowadays ready refuge of the "subconscious"; and thinks the warning words of Brabantio about the lady's elopement "might of course sink down into it," that he "might have had a deep-rooted inferiority complex," "might well himself wonder sometimes how Desdemona could have brought herself to love him," "might have a subconscious fear that she could easily fall out of love with him and transfer her affection to one of her own race" (pp. 13-14). For these *might*s one is grateful, yet the critic's candor here seems to outrun his discretion; as also when he finds Dr. Ernest Jones's Freudian notion of Hamlet a victim of the Oedipus complex (which, obviously, he is not, like the mythical or the Sophoclean Theban himself) "most interesting," and Professor Wilson Knight's truly "imaginative" interpretations (or *creations*) "of very great importance." To real people, of our time or earlier, who themselves knew nothing of the subconscious, may, if upon sufficient evidence, be attributed motives as there lurking, but not to the characters created by dramatists who likewise knew nothing of it, and who, if possibly they had divined it, were nevertheless hoping to be played, before an heterogeneous audience who certainly hadn't divined it themselves. And here I might quote again A. B. Walkley on "a

dramatist's personage" "the mere function of the dramatist" (*Drama and Life*, 1908, p. 149). But there is no need of that; for, not in the play, the subconscious is thus put into it, supplanting the postulate.

How, moreover, even "in terms of real life" and still less in those of psychology could these misgivings, of which there has not been the slightest evidence, in a noble soul "not naturally jealous" and amid the bliss the morning after his wedding-night, prompt him upon the villain's queries, echoes, and innuendoes (along with the "contracting" and "pursing" of his "brow together") to be, as indeed he now is, immediately "discomposed"? In the terms of drama, on the other hand, upon premises of a generous credulity and of an informant indisputably honorable and "wise," such precipitation and compression in the action are to be expected—to that end, of course, have the premises been provided. Mr. Duthie is right in saying that Othello hearkens to Iago because of his widespread reputation; but, like nearly all the other critics, he takes no notice of the fact that this is not a merely negative or inert but a positive, active, indispensable element in the dramatic structure, supporting the Moor as (at the risk of the comical)¹ he six several times, to reassure himself, calls the villain "honest" (and also twice calls him "wise" or "knowing," the founded belief thus propping the unfounded), whether before, amid, or after the temptation, or when, on the brink of discovery, he with a desperately clinging reiteration, replies to Emilia, "My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago." "Not easily jealous" is what the hero says of himself at the end, like both Desdemona (III. iv. 30) and even Iago ("a constant, loving, noble nature") at the outset; and if the victim because of Desdemona's intercession in Cassio's favor be "already uneasy" (p. 12) as the villain begins (though he begins, we shall see, before that), all these preparations for the great, dramatically fruitful, though improbable, situation of a noble and passionately loving, not jealous or suspicious soul, caught in a trap of jealousy nevertheless, have been thrown away. By thus making Othello jealous, moreover, suddenly, yet (despite himself, the poet, and the critic besides) "naturally," "easily," rather than startlingly though plausibly, there is thrown away also the high emotional effect. With no hero, most of the great critics have recognized, do we sympathize as with the Moor; but not with him dissected, psychologized. "Iago apart," says Henley of the tragedy, "the interest is entirely and unalterably emotional. You might play it in a barn, and it would still fulfil itself . . . once evoked, the emotion never lets go of your throat; and this is what makes *Othello* the play of plays that it is. 'Tis as it were a soul in earthquake and eclipse." Not so, however, except as Shakespeare wrote the play, intended it.

That is nearer to both life and art, I think, than Mr. Duthie makes it. There is, as from 1915 on I have tiresomely noticed, something of convention; yet it is natural and proper to believe what you are told unless you have better reason not to. Love and friendship are here in the way, but not for the moment in the foreground, as Iago with his prestige and Othello with his unguarded mind are;

¹ That the repetition does not become comical is owing partly, as Granville-Barker says, to the fact that the hero suffers so and dispenses suffering; partly to the fact that by the supporting technique everybody else fails to see through the hypocrite, as not Tartuffe or Dickens' Uriah, Pecksniff, and Rogue Riderhood; partly to still other considerations in a chapter of my *posthumous* where I discuss Granville-Barker's *Othello*.—For the sagacity cf. "knows all qualities, with a learned spirit, of human dealings," III. iii. 259; "O thou art wise, 'tis certain," IV. i. 75.

and in story, especially in drama, it is the prominent, positive, or active that counts. There a person believes what he is told; otherwise, no story: and that is particularly the case with slander. Presumption—expectation—of which the author takes advantage, is in its favor; and, so long before the heyday of psychology, this summary motivation is "good enough," as Mr. Duthie has it, but not, as he makes it—with the postulate or the supporting technique provided.

III

Another critic, Professor M. E. Prior,² not quite so recently, has, I cannot but think, ignored the postulate and the supporting structure, though in his rejoinder to me he insists that he hasn't; and like Professor Duthie (again) he makes Othello fall a prey to Iago's arts because of Desdemona's intercession in Cassio's favor. But misinterpreting, he has Desdemona pleading for reinstatement,³ not for restoration of friendly relations, and, venturing still farther, declares that for Othello "it is all terribly disquieting," "the turning-point of the play." Merely "uneasy" Mr. Duthie finds him; but what in either case could the Moor, still untempted, still in his senses, have expected of the gentle but spirited lady if not that she would now actively intercede for "Michael Cassio, that came a-wooing with you," and as the Moor presently tells Iago, "went between us very oft"? In order to make the downfall of the hero probable psychologically, how little of a man Messrs. Duthie and Prior thus alike make of him—how little leave to fall! Of him whom, according to Lodovico, "our full Senate call all-in-all sufficient . . . whom passion could not shake, whose solid virtue the shot of accident nor dart of chance could neither graze nor pierce"; and according to Iago himself at the outset, "another of his fathom they have none, to lead their business." Anyhow, from the pleading or the consequent uneasiness or disquietude, either, the villain derives no advantage in approaching the subject, having begun his diabolical game before:

No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.

What could he himself, moreover, as well as the Moor, have expected of Cassio, now in disgrace, if not that he would turn to Desdemona, and yet, as the General and his new counselor are approaching, would, in sheer embarrassment, "steal away"? Thus, in "terms of real life," the tempter shows up, intellectually, not much better than the tempted. As for the opinion, moreover, that Iago is the only "disinterested person" to suggest the idea of jealousy, Mr. Duthie might merely have said, the only *person*, Brabantio's caveat not counting since no normal lover distrusts the woman because she has eloped with him; and as for the disinterestedness, that is merely the effect again of the villain's reputation, which, however, might properly be still more suspect because of his raising such suspicions against the man whom by his own intriguing and his deceitful testimony he has been supplanting. Both critics, of course, practically dispensing with the postulate, must needs find some other facility for the villain

² "Character in Relation to Action in *Othello*," *M.P.*, XLIV (May 1947), 225-237; answered in *M.P.*, XLV (February 1948), 208-210; rejoinder, *M.P.*, XLV (May 1948), 270-272.

³ All that Cassio says of this is "I being absent and my place supplied, my general will forget my love and service"; all that Desdemona says is "I give thee warrant of thy place." But with the Moor she need not go so far: "Let him come when he will. I will deny thee nothing."

or a vulnerable spot in the hero's armor; but this realism of theirs, this psychology ("terribly disquieting") not only is unauthorized but seems to make greater demands upon our credence than the convention itself.

How little Mr. Prior really regards the postulate appears from his rejoinder as he notes that it is the opinion of the villain. Of this being in soliloquy (a convention he seems as little to regard as the postulate) he takes no account, nor of the fact that what even by villains or liars is there disclosed concerning the speaker's own projects and opinions is for the information of the audience and therefore is ordinarily no more to be discounted, as by Bradley and others it has sometimes been and (it seems) still is, than are prologues or epilogues, choruses or asides, or final official pronouncements like that of Fortinbras upon the Prince. The audience, manifestly, must not be misled, bewildered. A liar cannot lie to the audience, or (though in life he can) to himself.⁴ When in soliloquy the villain speaks—so truly though unnaturally!—ill of himself as Aaron, Richard, and Iago do, he is, of course, to be believed, and, with due allowances, even when he so speaks of other characters. When, accordingly, likewise in soliloquy, this one suspects the Moor of adultery with his wife, he (partly for our behoof!) immediately admits that he knows not "if't be true," but he "for mere suspicion in that kind will do as if for surety." In the postulate, however, like Edmund in his similar one, he does not speak ill—"is of a free and open nature"—any more than in the next soliloquy, again unnaturally—"is of a constant, loving, noble nature." By this word "noble," really, he himself is accepting Othello's reputation, which in the play is not, need not be, like Iago's, insisted upon; and also his phrase "free and open nature" is in the context to the "noble" nearly equivalent. What, indeed, the clever devil in tragedy—Iago, Edmund, and Richard alike—has to say of his victim's weak point as he plots against him, manifestly must be true for both the understanding and also the interest of the spectator. In his analysis he is justified by the outcome: as upon it he proceeds, he succeeds.

• How little in fact, despite his protests, Mr. Prior seems to appreciate a postulate appears as he resumes. Referring to "a significant school of modern Shakespearean scholars and critics," he disallows their opinion that comments by other characters (including the villain) upon the hero must be allowed "a literal and absolute validity":⁵

On the same basis the postulate about Iago is that he is honest, yet it turns out that he is not honest. For some reason [he adds ironically, as if the cases were similar] the critical principle will not hold for Iago as it must for Othello. The fact is, however, that it does not work for Othello either. If interpretation is guided simply by Iago's assertion that Othello thinks men honest that but seems to be so, it is a little difficult to explain why Iago's first attack on Othello fails. . . . Othello suspects Cassio. He suspects even Desdemona, who seems so honest that . . . Othello has only to see Desdemona to doubt his Ancient's initial accusation: "I'll not believe't" (p. 271).

⁴ Once Iago in soliloquy mockingly raises the question whether he is a villain, and jeers—"divinity [theology] of hell!" (II. iii. 356). Bradley discrediting Iago's "hatred" because it appears only in Act I (though there three times, also in II. i. 297-321, iii. 365-367, both in and out of soliloquy), adds, "and we know what his statements are worth."

⁵ Professor Schücking (1922) and Miss Bradbrook (1935) are cited as of the school; but the matter of soliloquy I should not expect them to have ignored, and if there be such a school, I would not call it significant.

That Iago is "honest" is, of course, not a postulate (could not be!); nor does it depend upon soliloquy. A postulate is an approach to a situation or to the whole story, a more or less improbable premise that the audience (or open-minded readers) accept only for the purposes of a (perhaps) still more improbable situation or story; reason, in Dryden's words, "suffering itself to be so hoodwinked that it may better enjoy the pleasures of the fiction." Now that Iago is "honest" he himself does not assert, save once, soliloquizing, in derision (II. i. 203), and from the outset the audience certainly do not accept (though strangely enough some few critics of late have done so), nor are expected to. In his fourth speech in the play, lines 41-65, he has, to the audience (but of course not to the ninny Roderigo before him) disclosed his diabolical hypocrisy rather clearly as, well-nigh soliloquizing, he ends with the antitheistical words "I am not what I am." (I am that I am, saith the Lord.) Dishonest, then, he does not *turn out* to be, but from the outset, in conduct as well as in his successive soliloquies, unmistakably is. It is only his completely successful deluding of the other characters that the audience have to accept, or, rather, to recognize. All the other characters as well must here, as they do, think this man "honest that but seems to be so" in order to procure from the audience the "willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith," and thus keep Othello in his belief (like Edgar and Gloster in theirs) from seeming, as to some people like Rymer he still does, "unobservant," unintelligent, silly. And as for the critic's last sentences, surely with the postulate the outcry quoted is not out of harmony—to see her is still to love her—for here the Moor again thinks this one "honest" who both so seems and is. But it is only a momentary revulsion. Of himself, certainly, he has not suspected Desdemona or Cassio, either; yet the "first attack" has not really "failed." In the same scene sixty lines later, as he returns to the stage, he groans,

I swear 'tis better to be much abus'd
Than but to *know't* a little.

And the words immediately preceding "I'll not believe't," upon the lady's exit—"O then Heaven mocks itself"—like those upon the lady's previous exit, before the attack—"Excellent wretch!⁶ Perdition catch my soul but I do love thee"—are meant but to show her power over him, to reveal—remind us of—his love for her, which, were there no Iago, would make disbelief in her impossible.

Instead of accepting and depending on the dramatist's postulate and supporting technique, Mr. Prior insists upon his own—"the pressure of events" and the changes in the hero's character—which is no better psychology, really, than the dramatist's postulate and is, moreover, like the "riskiness" of the union, as we see below, a notion not expressed. Imagine an audience, whether Elizabethan or modern, themselves applying the substitute or profiting by it! A postulate, as I said, is an approach or preparative, a facility, not (as here) a difficulty, a

⁶ Mr. Prior's defence of his word "paradox" as applied here and to the hero's suicide is very strange. Admitting that "wretch," like "rogue," "fool," and others, is in such context an Elizabethan "term of endearment," he still thinks that with "excellent" it makes a paradox or "oxymoron," arising out of the Moor's "disquietude." And admitting that (as I had said) "if ever in tragedy the death of a hero by his own hand was logical, it is here," he thinks this a "paradox" still. The only illogical effect I see in the play is that Othello should believe Iago—that trust should be distrust—which, however, is the premise, forestalling the paradox.

premise, not (as here) an inference, and is definite, explicit. It may be a traditional situation like the partition of the kingdom, the pound of flesh in one comedy, the fornication punishable with death in another; or may be mythical characters like the Weird Sisters and the Ghost at the outset; or else a formula of characterization (though rather of dramatic action, we shall presently see) such as in *Othello* we have been observing. And in all these cases it is not to be taken psychologically or philosophically but is pretty much, as the late Oliver Elton said of the first three, a "means of launching the play."⁷

How important in *Othello* both postulate and supporting structure were to the dramatist himself appears from the fact that he had gone out of his way to supply them. In Cinthio's *novella*, the source, nothing is said of the reputation of the villainous Ensign except that he was in great favor with the Moor, who had not "the slightest idea of his wickedness," while, unlike Shakespeare's Emilia, his good but timid wife had; and of the Moor himself we simply learn that he was very valiant and was highly esteemed by the Signoria. Of his being trustful or suspicious, wisely or unwisely, again nothing is said; but once the villain, having aroused his suspicions, begins to slander the lady, the Moor believes him, though at the same time threatening him for speaking ill of his wife. Still, though he has been extremely happy with her and though hitherto irreproachable, he now becomes ignoble, not only in "seeking every way to convince himself of what he fain would have found untrue" but also in promptly plotting her death and that of the Captain (or Cassio), "to whom he was much affectioned," yet warily, so that "their deaths should not be laid to his charge." The Ensign, moreover, is not the demon or motiveless hater of the good and lover of evil apparent in Shakespeare. Nor has he any "injustice" or adultery, real or imaginary, to resent, revenge. But (though "of the most depraved nature in the world") he is enamoured of Desdemona, and the motive of his villainy is love unrequited, bent upon injuring her and her suspected paramour, not her spouse. (Iago, on the other hand, says only,

Now I do love her too;
Not out of absolute lust, though peradventure
I stand accountant for as great a sin,
But partly led to diet my revenge—

for the adultery that he himself "knows not if't be true"!) And in the *novella* the opening given the villain is the lady's innocent but repeated and insistent pleading, not merely for reconciliation with the Captain but to the point that the Moor, as he tells the Ensign, "fears he should be forced at last to receive him back to service." "Perchance," says the Ensign, "the lady has good reason." "And wherefore?" asks the Moor. (Some of which would be better warrant for Messrs. Duthie and Prior's psychology, I think, than they have.)

Why, now, the changes and additions by the dramatist? Apparently in order to intensify the situation—to magnify both hero and villain, diminish the burden upon the one and double that upon the other, who takes the place of the classical Fate. Thus Othello is made like the tragic hero described by both Aristotle and Boileau and generally presented in ancient and French classical tragedy (less often in the Elizabethan), as by nature "good," brave, honorable,

⁷ *Modern Studies* (1907), pp. 115ff. Raleigh on the postulate, *Shakespeare* (1907), pp. 134ff.

eminent, in some way or other "héroïque"; and like the ancient, again, "whose misfortune is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment,"⁸ through the prompting of fatal or villainous influence such as that of the Weird Sisters or the Hellenic Fate or god. Of himself, near his end, the *Oedipus* of Sophocles speaks as having been "led by gods" (*Colon*. 998): of himself, still nearer his end, Othello speaks as led by a devil, and because then the truth must out, it does indisputably when, as here, protagonist and villain (not to mention any normal audience) clearly agree:

If that thou be'st a devil I cannot kill thee.
(*Wounds Iago*) I bleed, sir, but not kill'd.

In Shakespeare, says Raleigh, "character is not destiny" and what the hero or heroine suffers "is out of all proportion to what they do or are." This is in direct opposition to Bradley's opinion of a tragic hero as echoed by Brander Matthews: "betrayed by himself. He goes down because he is what he is." That is truer of Coriolanus, Brutus, or Timon than of Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, not to mention the noblest of them all. And at the outset (which is here the important matter) Cinthio's Moor in his jealousy is psychologically more consistent and probable, though otherwise, of course, not to be compared. The Ensign's "perchance" is by no means so subtle as Iago's "No, sure, I cannot think it," but is more to the point. Shakespeare's hero "goes down" because by the postulate he can, "for the moment," be what he is not.

V

Why now, in turn, the changes by these critics and most of the others, big in name or little, as they slight, ignore, or supplant the initial postulates or assumptions which the dramatist—in two of his greatest plays did he not know what he was about—has been at such pains in supplying? Critics (*κριτικοί*) are judges, and why this lack of candor, this unconscious *suppressio veri*? From an aversion to what is simple and explicit, and in order to make room, apparently, for a realistic or psychological speculation that by these barriers and safeguards is excluded; but in the process or upshot the critics offend against psychology, we have partly seen already, as much or more. If Gloster be an egoist, and in consequence know not his two sons, at the same or similar conclusions we should not unjustly arrive, to be sure, regarding Lear, who, troubled not by slander but flattery and its opposite, does not know his three daughters; but much more justly regarding Claudio and Leonato in *Much Ado*, who do not know Hero; or Posthumus, who does not know his wife, though "bred" together; or Othello, of course, who knows not wife, friend, or foe.⁹ The great tragic heroes, however, ancient or Elizabethan, certainly (despite the technique

⁸ *Poetics*, cap. 13, 15. On the "goodness" of the hero, *ibid.*, and cap. 3. *Art Poétique*, III, 247-248.—Professor Gilbert Murray (*Essays and Addresses*, 1921, p. 110) says that our word "good" has been "more sharply moralized" and perhaps we ought to say instead of "better than men are," "higher" or "greater." Cf. Sir H. J. C. Grierson (*Cross Currents*, 1929, p. 102): "the proper theme of tragedy is the defeat of a great soul, the undeserved ruin," etc. Or as Mr. Auden has said, "Both Pagan and Christian artist presupposed that their audience had a scale of values similar to their own, that they would recognize the Hero of Tragedy as what they would like to be, and the Rascal of Comedy as what perhaps they were but would rather not be." Cf. also Elton, pp. 93-94.

⁹ Professor Bradley and (though more psychoanalytically) Miss Bodkin include Desdemona as herself in a corresponding state. Bradley (1908, p. 192) says Othello "cannot have known much of Desdemona before his marriage"; but certainly both knew each other better than almost any other

of self-description) not egoistic, are, on the other hand, generally in some way or other noble, admirable, loving or lovable, intelligent, the Moor more so than any of these; and the more apposite conclusion is that only the foe—Edmund, Goneril, and Regan, Don John, Iachimo, Iago—does the hero not know. Which is in the premise, the postulate; and how much more critic-like to hearken to the dramatist and not thus beat about the bush! Then the logical though unpsychological, yet more sharply contrasted and heavily concentrated story of passion ensuing, holds tightly together.

For this, as not in life, hero and enemy are fenced about, so to speak, in an arena; the beginning of the combat (which is not merely between the lower self and the higher) is made clear-cut, and as clear-cut the ending, the hero despite his "noble" nature and "solid virtue" led to think what he would fain not think, to feel and do what he would fain neither feel nor do. And the combat here is according to the rules: by the postulate the Moor must listen, the villain, by his unquestioned repute, prevail. Which, however well (as in *Othello*) constructed and depicted, is still not psychology, of course, but drama, tragedy. Obviously it is not probable; but if "for the moment"—for the purposes of the story—we open-heartedly heed and follow the postulate, at the same time accepting the villain's reputation, it is plausible, and has the greater advantage which Aristotle, Johnson, and Scott acknowledged in Homer, and the latter two critics in Shakespeare—that of "the marvelous," the surprising, the exciting, which in Johnson's words "makes us anxious for the event," as the probable and psychological cannot in such measure do.

And the rules? "Or, il n'y a pas de scepticisme possible," said Valéry before the Académie, "à l'égard des règles d'un jeu." So said Henley before him, and also of this particular matter: "to begin upon the examination of an exemplary piece of tragedy by questioning the propriety of the convention were to make criticism impossible." And if in fiction the authority of the poets—along with Dryden's already cited—should not be adequate, there is that of a master in prose besides: "We must grant the artist his subject, his idea, his donnée," says James in his *Art of Fiction*; and (a little before that) "the premises that we must grant him, whatever they may be." Or, as the great classical scholar the late J. S. Phillimore, dealing with Virgil's *Elegies*, put it, "If you are not content to accept the poet's conditions, you are merely saying, I won't play. He cannot pipe if you will not dance." For here it is not a matter of "scepticism" but, as we have seen, of positive ignoring; and it is a most flagrant case of that violating of the author's intention against which I have long contended. On no other

pair in Shakespeare, who generally, like Romeo and Juliet, love at first sight. "Her father loved me, oft invited me, still questioned me the story of my life. . . . I ran it through even from my boyish days. . . . These things to hear would Desdemona seriously incline. . . . She'd come again and with a greedy ear devoutly up my discourse; which I, observing, took once a pliant hour; and found good means to draw from her a prayer. . . . that I would all my pilgrimage dilate." "I saw Othello's visage in his mind," says presently the lady herself. Later we learn that Cassio "went between them very oft"; and for being so surprised at the outcome Brabantio ought by the psychologists to be ticketed, along with Othello, Desdemona, Emilia, Cassio, and Roderigo, as "unobservant." "Conscious of being under the spell of a feeling which can give glory to the truth but can also give it to a dream," says Bradley; and Miss Bodkin (*Archetypal Patterns*, p. 222) has both lovers "suddenly wedded" to their "fantasies." The psychology is, I think, misapplied. Such a "fantasy" no normal white woman could have entertained; and what is by the poet presented is not abnormal but romantic.

terms here than his own, I think, can the tragedy proceed. Psychology reduces it to nonsense. "His trust where he trusts," says Bradley of the Moor, "is absolute": in this case trusting absolutely one he does not know or love to the deadly cost of two whom he does! Either, then, "supple and suspicious," as Booth made him, from the beginning, or else indeed "defective," stupid, which, consequently, the other leading characters are; all of which is contrary to the manifest intention of the text, and to most people's taste! And by the explicit denial of a jealous nature the dramatist derives from the postulate its full dramatic virtue and effect. Having by the impenetrability of Iago's mask set him, like the others, free of anything like the simpleton or gull, he has in the unjealous a hero who is wholly noble and lovable. Thus he achieves the most desirable of effects—a greater though not a realistic complication, a generous nature in a jealous rage.

This combat, however, is one-sided: it is no pitched battle, and the hero has no inkling that Iago is his mortal enemy, may even be a villain. Again it is a matter of situation rather than of character. Upon the postulate and its correlative (Iago's reputation) as upon a pivot, the tragic action turns and depends. His misgivings and insinuations, suggestions and aspersions, continually yet cautiously more venturesome and audacious, awaken little or no suspicion of the speaker; and between him and the hero there is only an external contention as the latter accepts or resists them. Once started, the greater combat is mainly within, by the noble, not jealous or suspicious hero spontaneously, irrepressibly disclosed. Now to the inconsistency of trusting the ill-known and wicked at the cost of distrusting the well-known and beloved, the postulate reconciles the open-minded and complaisant audience without reconciling the traits. Why, then, the inconsistency in the first place? For the more striking situation, the steeper contrast, the swifter movement, the emotional effect that Henley rightly celebrates; and it is the postulate that makes the inconsistency "for the moment"—for the purpose—effective and acceptable. With the traits reconciled, indeed—with at this point any psychology—the contrast would be diminished, the effect impaired.

VI

Tragedy Aristotle (*cap. 6*) holds to be "essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life, of happiness and misery": and here the happiness and misery are heightened by Iago's being, with only (we shall see) a vestige of a motive, little short of a demon, and by Othello's being a noble soul, not jealous, suspicious, or vindictive by nature. Now "In poetical drama," says Yeats,

there is, it is held, an antithesis between character and lyric poetry, for lyric poetry . . . can, as these critics think, but encumber the action. Yet when we go back a few centuries and enter the great periods of drama, character grows less and sometimes disappears. . . . Suddenly it strikes us that character is continuously present in comedy alone. . . . In writers of tragic-comedy (and Shakespeare is always a writer of tragic-comedy) there is indeed character, but we notice that it is in the moments of comedy that character is defined, in Hamlet's gaiety, let us say; while amid the great moments, when Timon orders his tomb, when Hamlet cries to Horatio, "Absent thee from felicity awhile" . . . all is lyricism, unmixed passion, "the intensity of fire."

So says of late Sir Maurice Bowra, commenting on Yeats's own poetical practice: "in the highest moments of all great poetical drama the personality of the character does not count so much as his situation, which is typical of a tragic human destiny, and at such moments individuality is merged in poetry." Perhaps Yeats was here remembering Longinus on the *Odyssey* and the decline in Homer: "great poets and prose writers, after they have lost their power of depicting the passions, turn naturally to the delineation of character." Perhaps, too, he was remembering Stevenson, in his *Humble Remonstrance*, as he describes the dramatic novel, such as some of Balzac's or as *Rhoda Fleming*, "the characters transfigured and raised out of themselves by passion . . . nice portraiture is not required. A novel of this class may be even great and yet contain no individual figure; it may be great because it displays the workings of the perturbed heart and the impersonal utterance of passion." And of the drama (or the dramatic novel) much the same said Henley, Gissing, and Santayana afterwards, or (if in such a matter the artists themselves are not to be trusted) no less a scholar than Sir Edmund Chambers. In the novel, to be sure, as Yeats, of course, recognized, and still more than in comedy, there is ordinarily delineation of character; but the critic-poet rightly prefers (as Johnson, even Wordsworth would¹⁰) life "exciting, at high tide, as it were"; and "in fine literature," he adds, in the same spirit as Mr. Eliot, quoted below, "there is something of an old-wives' tale."¹¹

VII

What is that? A tale such as in the ancient myths and legends, given new life by Homer and the Athenian dramatists—the stories of Oedipus, Orestes, Achilles, Odysseus, Clytaemnestra, Phaedra, and Medea—or such as the *märchen* or *nouvelle* of ancient times and the medieval, not to mention the modern such as *Gulliver* or *The Ancient Mariner*. Improbable but exciting, they too are commonly based upon postulates of some sort or other, in any case are in their improbability fairly consistent, are compact and swiftly moving. Fate or a villain or both together play a prevailing part, and atrocity is committed or more or less miraculously escaped. The leading characters are often very good or very wicked, are prompted by boundless love or either little-motived or quite motiveless hatred, and not infrequently they practise or undergo slander or other deception. Against these arts there is generally little or no safeguarding or protection, not nearly so much as in *Othello* and as little as in *Much Ado* or *Cymbeline*. Where a situation is at stake, it is easier and more natural to hold one's nearest and dearest to be traitors than one's intrusive informer a liar; innocence inclines to a belief in guilt more readily than to a belief in innocence, and the noble, trustful soul can be capable of trusting the wrong person to the point of direfully distrusting the right. Indeed, the convention is wider-reaching, beyond the scope of mere slander; and as in Richard's winning, amid the funeral of the king he had killed, the hand of the chief female mourner, whose husband he had killed, and his later win-

¹⁰ "The end of poetry [and of tragedy, he might have said] is to produce excitement in coexistence with an overbalance of pleasure."

¹¹ *Essays* (1924), pp. 296-297, 339-342; Bowra, *Heritage of Symbolism* (1943), p. 197; Gissing, *Immortal Dickens* (1925), p. 214; Santayana, *Poetry and Religion* (1900), pp. 272-273, 280; T. S. Eliot, *Use of Poetry* (1948), p. 152; Chambers, *Shakespeare: A Survey* (1925), pp. 74-75, 135.

ning from Queen Elizabeth, whose male children also he had killed, the hand of her daughter, it is a matter of the omnipotence of dissimulation and the persuasive arts.

In all this there is, we saw above, logic (of an external sort) rather than psychology; and it may work not only in the direct line but in reverse. If there is injection of error, there is also extraction of the truth. When Cloten in *Cymbeline* threatens the faithful Pisanio with death should he not tell of Imogen's whereabouts, he instead of deceiving complies, as, similarly threatened, do Pedringano in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (II. i) and (time and again) ladies and servants in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*,¹² not to mention the Sultan's daughter in the story of Aladdin and his lamp. When, on the other hand, Iachimo *swears* to his story Posthumus at once gives up. "Hark you, he *swears*; by Jupiter he *swears*. 'Tis true." The oath, moreover, is successfully not only offered to win credence for deceit but also demanded to forestall it. In the *Odyssey* the hero beseeches Calypso to swear a great oath not to beguile him (V. 179), and later, at Hermes' bidding, does the same (but here with threats of violence) to Circe (X. 299, 343), as in *Morte d'Arthur* (again) the Damosel of the Lake does to Merlin, who had better have then and there required the like of her (IV. i). The most conspicuous case of reversion, however, is at the dénouement of the tragedy now in question. As I have said before,

Now that on the stage (though not at all in the mind of Othello) the time is ripe and fully come, Emilia's assertion that often Iago had begged her to steal the handkerchief has weight which was wanting to all her previous solemn protestations of Desdemona's innocence, and he runs at the miscreant with drawn sword. In a trice she is cleared, as in little more than a trice she was incriminated, and by the report of Iago's seizing the handkerchief as of Cassio's once having it in his hand.

So, even more expeditiously and unreasonably yet correctly enough, Gloster is in a speech of three lines undeceived, though by the obviously treacherous and atrocious Regan, and now thinks Edgar has been deceived, "abus'd" (III. vii. 87-92). For in logic, as not in psychology, it is a poor rule that won't work both ways. What is believed when said should be disbelieved when unsaid; disbelief should be as easy as belief (though in life when belief has been so costly, disbelief is generally more difficult, less speedy than this); but if ever in great drama at the turning-points mere psychology or realism did not matter it is here. In the last analysis, the slanderer was credited that there might be a story, and so is still more summarily discredited that the story may end.

"To adhere to Iago's statement as the ultimate postulate of the play," says Mr. Prior in his rejoinder, "is to reduce the play to triviality." But "something of an old-wives' tale" are the words; and here all that Shakespeare is providing for is an access, an unguarded joint in the hero's harness, Iago confidently counted upon to do the rest. Then—thereafter—comes the real psychology, in the depiction of both villain and hero.¹³ Or if this summary device and that

¹² E.g. The Story of Sir Tristram: VIII, ii, xiii, xiv, xxx; IX, xxv.

¹³ It must be remembered—what in my *later* discussions I have myself too nearly forgotten—that, once the spell is on him, the Moor is now and then more positively responsive to suggestion and temptation than a man not "easily jealous" would be expected to be. Cf. my "Mainly Controversy," *P.Q.*, XXIV (1945), 313-314; but also my *Othello* (1915), pp. 10, 16, 17, 18, 21-22, 25. On the one hand, the action must be expedited; on the other, the hero, to remain such, must not be or seem a mere tool or clay in the devilish potter's hands.

of the villain's improbably unimpeachable reputation be trivial, what then of the Weird Sisters and of the Ghost in *Hamlet*; what of Richard, who in soliloquy, since he "cannot prove a lover is determined to prove a villain"; what of Iago himself with "his fairy-tale hatred,"¹⁴ for injuries that even he, in soliloquy, does not take seriously, and of which no one but Roderigo is aware? His only genuine motives are the hatred and his craving for Cassio's "place" (I. iii. 398), his only reasonable one the latter. Here (as in the other cases cited) is not only "a mere means of launching" the tragedy but also the motive power itself.

Old-wives' tales, to be of value, should be received and appreciated (primarily, though not finally) as by children. "To hear some critics," says Mr. C. S. Lewis in his British Academy address of 1942, "one would suppose that a man had to lose his nursery appreciation of *Gulliver* before he acquired his mature appreciation of it." (The truth seems to be that he should keep it, let it develop, still "listen like a three years' child," and when he comes himself to the point of analysing the *Ancient Mariner*, not, as some New Critics have been doing, listen no longer nor, turning round, make the killing of the Albatross "uxoricide" or "Original Sin," the Day "evil" and the Night "good," the Sun "the reflective faculty" and the Moon the "imaginative.") "The first thing," says, like Heine, this really conservative critic before that,

is to surrender oneself to the poetry and the situation. It is only through them that you can reach the characters, and it is for their sake that the characters exist. . . . A good example of the kind of play which can be twisted out of recognition by character criticism is the *Merchant of Venice*. Nothing is easier than to disengage and condemn the mercenary element in Bassanio's original suit to Portia, to point out that Jessica was a bad daughter, and by dwelling on Shylock's wrongs turn him into a tragic figure, etc. . . (pp. 9-10, 18).¹⁵

Yeats and Eliot, of course, whether as critics or creators, are not back-numbers, to the trivial or primitive inclined; on the contrary, they are (like Poe with his "universally appreciable," and James praising Flaubert for being so) far from the nursery; yet the present-day Anglo-American can even wish for "an audience which [thus similar in part to Shakespeare's own] could neither read nor write." Macaulay as a critic does not nowadays command such a hearing, but having surely as little taste as any man under the sun for the trivial, he

¹⁴ Mr. Middleton Murry's phrase for Shylock, but in keeping with "hate him as I do hell-pains"; "I hate the Moor"; "I endure him not"; in the first four scenes. "The hatred," in Mr. Murry's words again, "of the bad for the good." In my *Shakespeare and Other Masters*, pp. 236-239, I oppose Professor Kittredge's opinion that Iago is actuated by "resentment for injustice" and by sexual jealousy. In soliloquy the former motive, for which Mr. Kittredge thinks he has reason, does not appear; and the latter, the suspicion of adultery with Emilia, is, though Mr. Kittredge does not think so, openly a pretext. (I. iii. 394-395 "I know not if't be true," and at II. i. 316, the devil has added Cassio.) The genuine psychology here, I think, is where the demon *cherishes* the "mere suspicion" of adultery till it becomes the "poisonous mineral" that "grows my inwards" (I. iii. 395; II. i. 303-306) and by this latter state of mind Mr. Kittredge is impressed; but the "doing as if for surety," "pluming up my will," "dighting my revenge" he seems not to notice.

¹⁵ On the twisting of the *Ancient Mariner*, cf. *PMLA*, LXIII (1948), 214-233, "Symbolism in Coleridge." The supposedly proper opposition between the child's understanding and the man's is almost the same as that between the commonalty's and the élite's; for which see Burke in the introduction to the *Sublime and Beautiful*, Wordsworth in his prefaces; Raleigh, pp. 133-135; Elton, p. 106; W. W. Lawrence, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (1931), p. 15—Heine on Shakespeare's *Mädchen und Frauen* (*Werke*, Elster, V, pp. 387-388).

observes, at the beginning of his essay on Milton: "After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect."

Not always, to be sure; but the prodigious postulates underlying *Paradise Lost*, for instance, which in both Milton's day and Macaulay's own had more than tradition to warrant them! No wonder the Puritan, however startlingly, himself attributed to poetry—"simple, sensuous, and passionate"—something of an old-wives' tale. And all these, not only critics but poets, are, then, of those who on the authority of Ben Jonson are best fitted to speak to the question; yet as critics, like Wordsworth and Coleridge, they have in what follows the "suppositions" both implicitly and explicitly paid homage to "good sense," which nowadays is too infrequently or grudgingly rendered. But, as in reading *Gulliver*, the *Ancient Mariner*, Shakespeare, or even the great epic, we should do, they have kept in mind that the child is father of the man, and that we must become as little children to enter into the kingdom of poetry.

VIII

It is only, moreover, as something of a transfigured old-wives' tale, I think, that this tragedy can acceptably end. As in the other great tragedies of Shakespeare and the ancients, there is at the *finale* "a high note of reconciliation" and repose—in this one preëminently, and "the Moor of the Council-Chamber and the quay at Cyprus," says Bradley despite his psychology, "has returned, or a greater and nobler Othello still." "Made perfect in the act of death," says Raleigh, Elton assenting. And now the voice of the General rings clear again, deepened, anguished, but more than ever his own. "All art aspires towards the condition of music," says Pater; and in the essay on Mérimée, "At the bottom of the true drama there is ever, logically at least, the ballad; the ballad dealing in a kind of short-hand (or, say, in grand, simple, universal outlines) with those passions, crimes, mistakes, which have a kind of fatality in them." The old-wives' tale here raised to a higher, a finer power! The mere psychologist or pathologist, of course, cannot see this, or (rather) hear it, as the humble spectator can: since for them Othello has been mainly his own undoing, he must now in his glorious final words be "sentimentalizing," "like Richard II." Mr. Duthie passes the matter over; yet Mr. Prior, who considers the jealousy and the killing to be violence done not so much to the hero's psychology as to his morality, still can manage to speak of the "return of the original Othello," his "salvation," "his final restoration to greatness." But if he had it really in him to feel and do all that in the last two acts he has been feeling and doing, with the villain only calling it up and out of him, then the Othello of the Council-Chamber and the quay does not—simply cannot—return to us, and the note of reconciliation is not high or clear. Or (to change the figure) it is only after he has undergone "eclipse" that the old, the true Othello, changed but purified, can, to console us, shine forth again. As above I said, the structure is logical, poetical, not psychological, holding together, as an old-wives' tale should. A spell laid can be lifted; and at the dénouement, as we have seen, by a word or two the hero is set right. But psychology here gets positively in the way. If there is no spell, no convention of belief, and "nothing that is in Iago is absent from

Othello," as Mr. Van Doren¹⁶ says and Mr. J. I. M. Stewart seems to think, or if "in the brothel scene," as Miss Bradbrook declares, "Othello speaks with the voice of Iago"—even, I take it, the lines beginning "O thou weed" or

But there, where I have garnered up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life,—

why, almost any audience will rather cling to their occasion for sympathy, stick to the text and prefer the spell.

For "Like all the other Elizabethan poet-dramatists," says Mr. E. C. Petteet in "Shakespeare's Conception of Poetry," and he might have added, the ancient Athenian, Shakespeare "enchants us into a world of make-believe; his art is never directed, as it is by most modern dramatists, towards persuading us that what we see on the stage is merely an extension of the real world." "Poetry is not at its best," says Santayana, both relevantly and profoundly, "when it depicts a further possible experience, but when it initiates us, by feigning something which as an experience is impossible, into the meaning of the experience which we have actually had."

IX

In Shakespeare generally, and particularly in *Othello*, it is not a slice of life: fictitious, of course, even as such it is not a report, a record. Above I have spoken of the Moor's and the Ancient's reputations as a supporting structure; but a structure the play is as a whole, and more than most others "a legitimate poem," in the words of Coleridge (who, however, is not applying his definition to this drama or to drama in general, either), "the parts of which mutually support and explain each other." Here, as in a measure we have seen, they do. As in a Gothic cathedral, there is a system of thrusts and counter-thrusts (with neither Iago's reputation nor any other member of the framework a merely negative, inert, or idle one) whereby the structure is held high in air; and if anybody doubted the villain's integrity, as in *Titus Andronicus* or *Richard III*, on the one hand, or the Moor's really noble and not jealous nature, on the other, the fabric would collapse, crushing the interest and sympathy dependent upon it. Where in drama everybody is "unobservant" or "stupid" nobody is, unless a point is made of it, as here there is not.¹⁶ Likewise (for that matter) "support" and "explanation," again, thrust and counter-thrust, would be involved in Iago's "resentment for injustice" and his "sexual jealousy": if these grievances were founded or known of, the slander must have been positively suspected by a hero gifted with ordinary sense, and also the villain's intrusive activity must have been, not only by him but by Emilia, Cassio, or Desdemona, instead of their being, all four alike, as by many they have been made out to be "unobservant" or "stupid," "incurious" or "uncalculating"—the character criticism thus defeating itself. The repetition of "honest" upon their lips runs the danger, indeed, of turning comical; but by such criticism that danger is heightened, and still

¹⁶ The structure of hypocritical deception here is, though more subtle, similar to that employed in the treatment of disguise, as I show in an unpublished article on "Character Criticism." What above all credibilizes the "honesty" and sagacity is that (IV. ii) Desdemona and Emilia alike turn to Iago for counsel and that Emilia both to him and Othello utters imprecations on the "villain" whom, suspecting, she does not detect. By psychologizing this trust in Iago, therefore, critics are wrecking the structure, explaining the credibilizing—the explaining—away.

more would it be if anybody doubted or questioned. And all this manipulation conduces to an effect desirable in poetry and in some regards still more in drama, that (really) of the simple and concrete. (In my presentation it may not seem to do so; but in such reasonings, of course, neither author nor audience would engage, being only with the effect concerned.) Or take still another instance, the dénouement as described above, which is simply the external complication reversed; take even the handkerchief upon which it hinges, and which is (though Mr. Prior does not, like the others, call it so) a "trivial," an old-wives' tale *motif*, not artistically handled by Cinthio—how, as made momentous by the poet and as demanded and dwelt upon, it becomes in the loss of it—"Sure there's some wonder in this handkerchief"—and in the final disclosure, nearly symbolical, and thus as between the Moor and the others, not to mention the audience, saves, by its recurrence, a deal of comment and analysis! It is at the center, however, that the mutual support and explanation, the thrust and counter-thrust, are most apparent—in the contrast between the hero's character and his conduct, between what he is and what he does, as he falls a prey to a demon in impenetrable disguise. (Which in itself is the more psychologically improbable, the hero succumbing to the power represented in the postulate, or the villain throwing, by his motive-hunting and motive-discrediting, his motiveless hatred and unfaltering purpose into high relief?) The action not springing from the character, then, nor the character from the action, either, both together do from the requirements of the whole; and it is the almost universal neglect of the unrealistic members of the structure—the postulate, the undisputed reputations, the motiveless malignity, and the other improbable or "trivial" elements which the dramatist took the pains to supply—that has been the main cause of misinterpretation—of raising the villain intellectually in our opinion and lowering all the rest.

X

Since Mr. Duthie and Mr. Prior pretty much keep to the main and crucial point in the interpretation—how "that demi-devil" breaks through the defences and gains a hearing—I need not here take up again the subject of the protagonist as otherwise or afterwards a psychological study. On the whole the Moor has been less a prey than Shakespeare's other heroes to the tragic-fault finders, pathological diagnosticians, or philosophical paradox-makers, being safeguarded by whom but the villain himself. Does he not, in soliloquy too, twice call him "noble," and, the second time, add,

And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband, (II. i. 299-300)

thus disconcerting, one would think, those who conceive of the marriage as anyhow destined for disaster, Iago or no Iago? Surely he is neither mistaken nor unimportant, is no more than his words in the postulate negligible. But a *coppia delinquente*, criminal twins! How on such terms could there be high tragedy? "The love of Othello and Desdemona," says Mr. Murry, "is in itself unclouded, and had there been no Iago it would have endured to death."

With the Thane of Glamis, of course, the pathologists have felt less hampered; and not long since he has been made out to be not only timorous (or

else "falsely courageous") but "feeble," "morbid," "diseased," "degenerate," or "not only wicked but (what is worse) mean and small." Some of which *epithets*, singly or in company, besides others equally disparaging, have recently been (quite etymologically) "laid upon" heroes of other great tragedies—upon Hamlet, for instance, as "slothful" (*accidial*), "hysterical," "sentimental," "inclined to attitudinizing," "diseased" (again!), in "terror of death," or "dying internally and cultivating his malady," "poisonous," "venomous," like his father's spirit "devilish," or mad not only in craft but in fact. That, surely, comes of "character criticism"—at a cost to "the poetry and the situation," at a cost, indeed, to the whole. Somewhat similar epithets could, through the same neglect, have been applied to the heroes of the Athenian dramatists, although these provide no such amplitude of material for portraiture. But as the Croisets said of Sophocles, "ses personnages principaux malgré les défauts qu'il leur prête à dessein ont tous un air de noblesse et de grandeur. Le motif fondamental qui les inspire est généreux . . . ces défauts nécessaires . . . ne les avilissent jamais." Much the same of Sophocles Sir Maurice Bowra¹⁷ since has said and something the same could be said in turn of Shakespeare in his greatest tragedies. Even his hero-villains Richard III or King John, and his Richard the sentimental, in dealing with whom the poet is restricted by history, are far from contemptible. In any case it is not within the compass of my imagination that, as presented or implied by the critics above, the heroes or the audience of Sophocles and Shakespeare, should have been so radically different.

They were not; and in spirit, purpose, and procedure, the dramatists were essentially the same. "Les grands sujets qui remuent fortement les passions . . . doivent toujours aller au delà du vraisemblable." And why? Even as Corneille has it, to arouse the passions powerfully, both in the hero and also in the audience. And how? By creating a bigger contrast or conflict than in life itself, Bridges and Shaw alike have said, between character and conduct. Through what means? By the finger of Fate or of a villain. "That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater height," says Dryden of his *All for Love*, and his words equally apply to Shakespeare's similar tragedy, "was not offered by the play; for the crimes of love which [Antony and Cleopatra] both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity [*Necessitas*] or fatal ignorance, but were wholly *voluntary*." Or, as Thomas Hardy has it, "the best tragedy—highest tragedy, in short—is that of the worthy encompassed by the inevitable. The tragedies of immoral people are not of the best." Merited suffering, of course, moves the spectator less than the unmerited; but if, not supernaturally influenced, Macbeth or Hamlet were, as by at least two notables they both have been said to be—God save the mark!—"diseased," or Othello (he too a tragic hero) were, as of late, "pathological," or merely "unintelligent," "egoistic," "sentimental," by predisposition jealous, or if Desdemona, for that matter, were "enough of the supersubtle Venetian" of Iago's description to strengthen the case for Othello's jealousy, why, how little still would be the emotional power of any of these upon us! Modern drama, deriving the action more strictly from the character, much diminishes our pity when the hero commits the Aristotelian "deed of horror"; and when to keep our pity unimpaired the deed is much less

¹⁷ *Hist. Litt. Gr.* (1891), III, 264; *Sophoclean Tragedy* (1944), pp. 370-371.

than horrible or terrible, it takes away our fear. Also modern drama, thus necessarily retarding the movement and diminishing the excitement, slackens the suspense. Like Dryden, Keats, and Racine ("la violence des passions"), Henry James demands in art "intensity"; like Aristotle, Dr. Johnson, Scott, Poe, and Bridges, Mr. Eliot, it seems, values surprise if, at the same time, in the words of Bridges, "it satisfies";¹⁸ and the audience, Othello having already captivated them, are, by the insidious words "thinks men honest that but seem to be so," kept anxiously awake as they could not be by indications in the Moor (thereby nearly alienating them) of a predisposition to suspicion or jealousy. Now the Weird Sisters (in the text itself always so called), who are Holinshed's "goddesses of destiny," are given some of the traits and practices of witches, because the body of the audience knew not the Norns or the Parcae; but as more than witches ("a parcel of demented old women") they by their prophecies, in the thaneship of Cawdor partly and almost immediately fulfilled, mislead the hero, himself ever (except before the supernatural) courageous, at the outset honorable and admirable, who, moreover, as his conscience struggles within him has been found by seven fairly recent critics, alike sensitive and sensible—Raleigh, Bridges, Maeterlinck, J. J. Chapman, Quiller-Couch, Murry, and Bowra¹⁹—to be "essentially noble." "Macbeth is not a murderous politician," Raleigh has it; "he is a man possessed." "A fatal hallucination," says Quiller-Couch, "which almost every commentator has done his best to belittle." Take away the Weird Sisters, says Maeterlinck before them both, and the Thane "n'est plus qu'un assassin odieux et forcené." "The terror [the tragedy] inspires," says Chapman, the like of which is far more emphatically to be said of Othello, "is due to the abyss that lies between the inner natures of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and the murder they perpetrate": only by the initial postulate or the villain's prestige (alike by criticism neglected) is the abyss flown over or bridged. And the pity? Ordinarily the final pronouncement is authoritative, but Malcolm, son of the murdered, saying "this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen," of their consciences and of the Weird Sisters does not know; and for the Moor there is pity—because also love and admiration—as in the theater never before or since. Jealous naturally, he would lose it nearly all to the lady. Here, however, are not only postulate and supporting structure but also as never even in ancient tragedy, Destiny visibly, effectually active, from the outset directing and disposing. Fate? "His Moorship's Ancient," "that demi-devil," needs not the sex or name. (But he is of course only what the hero wounding him now calls him, which, as having in the deadly game both won and lost, he in both sporting spirit and defiant silence accepts.)

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¹⁸ *Influence of the Audience* (1927), p. 16; Eliot, *Selected Essays* (1932), pp. 208ff; *Atlantic*, Feb. 1951, p. 36.

¹⁹ Raleigh (1907), p. 197; Bridges, pp. 13-15; J. J. Chapman, *Glance toward Shakespeare* (1922), pp. 71-72; Murry, *Shakespeare* (1936), p. 271; Bowra, p. 373. Maeterlinck, *Temple Ensévelé* (1902), pp. 128-129; *Double Jardin* (1909), p. 217. Cf. Bradley, Herford, and Oscar Firkins, in the words of the first named: "the deed is done in horror . . . one may almost say, as if it were an appalling duty."—If space permitted, a word should be said of the poetry—"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow"—incompatible, unlike Iago's, with "murderous." Cf. Eliot in the *Atlantic*, cited in note 18.

Two Problems in the Folio Text of *King Lear*

PHILIP WILLIAMS

DURING the last twenty years no other play of Shakespeare's has received more bibliographical and textual attention than *King Lear*.¹ As a result of these studies, it is now generally held that the first quarto, printed by Nicholas Oakes in 1608, is a "bad" quarto, reproducing a memorially reconstructed text; that the second quarto, printed in 1619 but falsely dated 1608, is a reprint of Q1; and that the First Folio text was printed from a copy of Q1 that had been extensively corrected by reference to a manuscript available to the editors of the Folio. It is also now generally accepted that the Folio text of *King Lear* was set by a single compositor, identified by Willoughby as Folio Compositor B.² However, in preparing a review of Dr. Alice Walker's *Textual Problems of the First Folio*, I have discovered new evidence suggesting that at least two of the fundamental assumptions about *Lear* are wrong. The first of these assumptions is that the Folio text of *Lear* was entirely the work of Compositor B. If this assumption is wrong, some of the recent conclusions about the characteristics of Compositor B's work will be subject to modification, and serious questions will arise concerning the accuracy of present spelling tests as a method of compositorial determination. The second assumption is that the Folio text was set directly from a corrected copy of the first quarto. If this assumption is also wrong, it will be necessary to re-examine basic theories about the copy for other plays in the First Folio.

I

In a recent article on the compositorial work in the Folio text of *Lear*, Professor I. B. Cauthen concluded that the entire text of the play had been set by Compositor B,³ and more recently Dr. Alice Walker has maintained that the Folio text is wholly the work of the same compositor.⁴ Professor Cauthen presents in tabular form the significant *do*, *go*, *here*, and *traitor* spellings that

¹ Among the more important of these studies are Madeleine Doran, *The Text of King Lear*, Stanford University, 1931; B. A. P. Van Dam, *The Text of Shakespeare's Lear*, Louvain, 1935; W. W. Greg, *The Variants in the First Quarto of 'King Lear'*, *A Bibliographical and Critical Inquiry*, London, 1940; Leo Kirschbaum, *The True Text of King Lear*, Baltimore, 1945; G. I. Duthie, *Shakespeare's King Lear A Critical Edition*, Oxford, 1949; Alice Walker, *Textual Problems of the First Folio*, Cambridge, 1953.

² E. E. Willoughby, *The Printing of the First Folio of Shakespeare*, Oxford, 1932, pp. 54-59.

³ I. B. Cauthen, "Compositor Determination in the First Folio *King Lear*," *Studies in Bibliography*, V (1952-1953), 73-80.

⁴ Walker, *Textual Problems*, p. 62.

Willoughby proposed as a means of identifying the Folio compositors.⁵ I reproduce his table here.

	2q2	2q2 ^r	2q3	2q3 ^r	2q4	2q4 ^r	2q5	2q5 ^r	2q6	2q6 ^r	2t1	2t1 ^r	2t2	
doe		I	I								I	I		
goe				I	2	4							I	
here		2	3			I		4			2	2	2	
traytor														
do	I	3	3	4	5	4	3	2		3	4	4	6	
go				I	2		2	3		I	I		3	
heere	2	2				I	2			3	3	I		
traitor														
	2t2 ^r	2t3	2t3 ^r	2t4	2t4 ^r	2t5	2t5 ^r	2t6	2t6 ^r	2s1	2s1 ^r	2s2	2s2 ^r	2s3
doe			I							I				
goe		3								I	I			
here	2	3	I	I		2			I				2	
traytor														
do	4	2	1	3	4	3	9	6	2	10	1	6	5	2
go	2	3	5	3	1	1	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	1
heere	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	2		5	3	1	1
traitor	2		5	1		I		2			3	I	I	

As Professor Cauthen admits, the evidence supplied by this spelling test is ambiguous and inconclusive; on only eight of the twenty-seven pages are B forms alone found; on other pages, the evidence is conflicting (on 2q3 there are actually more A forms than B); and on several pages the evidence is insufficient to make identification possible. Professor Cauthen bases his argument for a single compositor on two principal assumptions: that the texts immediately preceding and following *Lear* were set by Compositor B; and that the spellings of eleven other words in the *Lear* text, for which Compositors A and B have preferential and differing spellings, conform in general to the B rather than to the A forms. He further observes that "an examination of 600 variant spellings of 142 words in the Folio text of *Lear* failed to bring to light any demonstrable two-compositor pattern" (p. 75). Professor Cauthen concludes that the spellings in *Lear* which diverge from Compositor B's usual habits are to be explained by "part-psychological, part-muscular influences" and by the fact that printed rather than manuscript copy caused him to deviate from his normal practice. The basic weakness in this argument is that relatively few of the divergences from B spellings can be explained by the use of a corrected exemplar of Q1.⁶

In order to shed further light on compositor identification in *Lear*, it will be convenient to consider another Folio text. I believe that we are on firmer ground in the identification of compositors in *Troilus and Cressida* than in any other play in the Folio. Quite fortuitously, one of the two Folio compositors spelled *Ulysses* with a *y*, whereas his co-worker invariably spelled it with an *i*. Compositor B, who used the *y* spelling, also invariably used a *y* in the form

⁵ It will be recalled that Compositor A spells these words *doe, goe, here, traytor*; Compositor B spells them *do, go, heere, traitor*.

⁶ It would be incredible to suppose that a corrector would alter *do* spellings in Q to *doe*, or *young* to *yong*.

Troyan, whereas Compositor A, who used an *i* in *Ulisses*, always used the form *Troian*. Since these two words appear with great frequency in *Troilus and Cressida*, it is almost possible to divide the play between Compositors A and B on the strength of this evidence alone. When corroborated by the Willoughby spelling test, there can be little if any uncertainty about the compositors of *Troilus and Cressida*.⁷

On the pages of *Troilus* set by Compositor B, the entrances are centered with great precision. Compositor B seems to have set the words and then filled in quads from the margins of his measure, working toward the center, with the result that there is usually not more than a 2 mm. difference between the right and left margins. On the pages set by Compositor A, however, entrances are often imperfectly centered. Compositor A seems to have worked by estimate, setting quads from the margin until he reached the point at which the words of the direction were to begin. As a result, Compositor A's entrances are rarely perfectly centered, the difference between the right and left margins being occasionally as much as 20 mm.⁸

The following tabulation of the marginal measurements for the centered entrances of *Troilus and Cressida* shows the variation that may be expected from the two compositors. I indicate above the page the compositor by whom it was set.

B	A	A	A/B*	B	B	B	B
X ¹	79	80	¶ ¹	¶ ¹	¶ ²	¶ ²	¶ ³
24-23	17-25	36-30	24-30	—	24-24	24-26	—
	27-22	36-29	32-38			22-24	
	37-27	40-30	8-7				
			25-25				
			40-30				
			38-30				
			35-32				

B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
¶ ³	¶ ⁴	¶ ⁴	¶ ⁵	¶ ⁵	¶ ⁶	¶ ⁶	¶ ¹¹
{ 18-18	23-35	30-39	17-27	21-19	25-39	{ 12-13	—
35-40						18-22	
	28-36		19-36	32-36			12-16
		{ 11-11		18-29			
		30-30					

⁷ The identification of the *Troilus and Cressida* compositors is discussed fully in my unpublished dissertation, *Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: The Relationship of Quarto and Folio*, The University of Virginia, 1949.

⁸ John Cook Wyllie of the University of Virginia kindly called my attention to this evidence.

A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 1 ^r 9-9 17-15	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 2 18-32	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 2 ^r 11-13 28-30	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 3 23-40	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 3 ^r 8-11 25-26	B 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 4 22-24	B/A [†] 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 4 ^r 12-11 23-28	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 5
	33-34		8-7 19-30	28-27 19-23		32-32	
20-28						32-34 24-27 34-34	
A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 5 ^r	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 6	A 2 $\frac{2}{1}$ 6 ^r	A 3 $\frac{2}{1}$ 1				
22-46	25-44	32-37	9-11				
20-24	22-25	29-40	28-37				
	23-26	30-35	34-30				
30-38	30-40						
21-26	25-40						
23-46	30-38						
	29-39						
	26-39						
	31-37						
	22-37						
	20-23						
	19-17						
	30-36						
	30-38						
	19-19						
	10-10						

*Col. A set by A; Col. B by B.

†A begins setting at Col. B, line 41.

The measurements for the centered entrances in *Lear* are given below:

2q2 17-20	2q2 ^r 13-9 33-27	2q3 34-34	2q3 ^r 34-32	2q4 18-30	2q4 ^r 34-33	2q5 33-34	2q5 ^r 16-16
{ 0-0 21-23			33-36	32-40	35-37	35-35	20-19
				13-13 33-34	35-31	30-36	37-31 15-15
2q6 14-15 21-17	2q6 ^r 9-9	2r1 32-37	2r1 ^r 16-16	2r2 35-32	2r2 ^r 15-15	2r3 25-25	2r3 ^r 23-22
		20-20	33-33	10-6	39-32	21-27	22-23
	25-30	34-33				28-28	
2r4 25-24 23-23 32-34	2r4 ^r 34-35	2r5 16-17	2r5 ^r 28-25	2r6 35-35	2r6 ^r 32-29	2r1 18-17	2r1 ^r 5-5
		34-34	24-24		34-31	15-15	35-35
	30-29					{ 9-7 26-25	33-33
{ 13-14 33-34 32-35 22-22	{ 7-7 30-25					{ 5-3 8-9 27-25 { 5-3 12-12 34-34	

2s2	2s2 ^r	2s3
7-9	30-30	32-30
35-29	35-35	
25-35	16-16	
24-34		

It is evident that on 2s3^r-2s3 the entrances, with three exceptions, are centered with Compositor B's usual precision.⁹ When this evidence is correlated with that supplied by the spelling test, it appears that on these 12 pages (2s3^r-2s3) there are 114 B spellings as opposed to only 11 conflicting A forms. I think it is safe to conclude that these pages were set by Compositor B. On 2q2^r, 2q4-2q6, 2r1, 2r2^r, 2r3, however, there is at least one imperfectly centered (that is, having a 4 or more mm. difference) entrance on each page. On these 9 pages, which have a total of 55 B spellings, there are 25 conflicting A forms. On pages 2s3^r-2s3 the ratio of B forms to A forms is about 10 to 1, whereas on the other pages the ratio is about 2 to 1.

But even more convincing evidence drawn from the text of the play supports the conclusion that the text is not the work of a single compositor. The spelling of the name *Gloucester* is not consistent throughout the play. I present below a tabulation of all occurrences of this name in speech-headings and text.

	2q2	2q2 ^r	2q3	2q3 ^r	2q4	2q4 ^r	2q5	2q5 ^r	2q6	2q6 ^r	2r1	2r1 ^r	2r2
Gloucester	1		1										
Glou.	6			12									
Glos(t).											1	1	
Gloster	1	1							2	1	1	1	3
Glo.					2				4	8	3	1	4
Glouster													3

	2r2 ^r	2r3	2r3 ^r	2r4	2r4 ^r	2r5	2r5 ^r	2r6	2r6 ^r	2s1	2s1 ^r	2s2	2s2 ^r	2s3
Gloucester	1	3				1					1			
Glou.	8	7	13	6	9	14	7							
Glos(t).														
Gloster	1		2		2					1	3	1		
Glo.	2									3				
Glouster		3	2	5	1	1	2							

The distribution of forms in this table suggests that two compositors used different spellings for the name *Gloucester*. One spelled it with an *o*, the other with an *ou*. These *o* and *ou* spellings are found both in abbreviated forms in speech-headings and in unabbreviated form in the text. Compositor B, who

⁹ The three exceptions occur in Col. B of 2s2 between lines 21 and 41. I am led to suppose that this short passage was not set by B. Unfortunately, the only significant spelling occurring in the passage is *traitor*; the twelve other characteristic B forms occur elsewhere on the page.

used the *ou* spelling, is seen at work on 2q2, 2q3^v, 2r3^v-2r6^v. On the pages which by the spelling test and supported by the evidence of centered entrances were clearly set by Compositor B, the *ou* spellings of *Gloucester* appear 95 times as opposed to 10 *a* spellings and 5 *Glo.* speech-headings. On the pages which do not seem to have been set by Compositor B, the *ou* spelling does not appear.¹⁰ I suggest that the evidence presented here demonstrates that the Folio text of *Lear* is not the work of a single compositor.

II

Generally speaking, it is easy enough for bibliographers to prove that Edition B was set directly from Edition A. But to prove that Edition B was *not* set from Edition A is a different matter. Unfortunately, the nature of the problem seems to preclude the possibility of positive proof. In order to show that the Folio text of *Lear* was not set from a corrected copy of Q1, it will be necessary to rely heavily on the cumulative effect of a mass of negative evidence.

About the use of quartos as copy for some Folio texts there is no question. According to Greg,¹¹ the Folio texts of *Much Ado*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *1 Henry IV*, and *Romeo and Juliet* were set directly from copies of the quartos, some of which had received minor editorial revision. With these plays, there is no difficulty in establishing the relationship of the quartos to the Folio texts. But with other plays (particularly *Richard III*, *Lear*, and *Troilus and Cressida*) the question of the Q-F relationship remained long in doubt; although there is some evidence to suggest that F was set from Q, other evidence conflicts with this conclusion. The fact that for some plays set directly from quartos the evidence is clear and convincing, whereas for others the evidence is conflicting and ambiguous, is in itself enough to arouse suspicion. It is difficult to believe, as Professor Shaaber has observed of *2 Henry IV*, "that the compositors who, in setting up *1 Henry IV*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and other plays from Q copies, followed their originals closely enough to make the indebtedness quite plain would now [in F] have departed from their copy in every insignificant way open to them."¹²

One difficulty suggested by those scholars who did not believe that the F texts of some plays were set from corrected quartos is the poor printer's copy that a heavily annotated quarto would make. To this objection may be added a second. It would be more difficult to collate and annotate some pages of the *Lear* quarto than it would be to transcribe directly from the manuscript that

¹⁰ The spellings of the name *Gloucester* seem to be fairly constant characteristics of Folio Compositors A and B. In the pages of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *1 Henry VI*, and *2 Henry VI* which were set by Compositor B, the *ou* forms occur 25 times as opposed to 18 *Gloster* forms. In the pages of the same plays set by Compositor A, *Gloster* occurs 55 times and the *ou* forms only 6 times.

The identification of compositors in *Lear* is still far from satisfactory, but more precise identification of their work must await further study in which the inadequacies of the present spelling tests are rectified. Some of the non-B pages in *Lear* certainly seem to be the work of Compositor A, but there are too many deviations from his normal practices to permit positive identification. Some of the difficulty in the non-B pages of *Lear* may be explained by the presence of a third compositor who, although long suspected, has never been identified.

¹¹ *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1951, pp. 188-189.

¹² M. A. Shaaber, ed., *The Second Part of Henry IV*, Philadelphia, 1940, p. 511.

was being used for reference. Although these general and theoretical objections to the theory of corrected quartos being used for Folio copy are not sufficient to rule out the possibility, they at least present serious questions about the validity of the hypothesis.

The F texts of both *Love's Labor's Lost* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* were set directly from quartos. Both quartos had received some perfunctory editorial correction in which the speech-headings were not overlooked by the editor. Neither Folio compositor, however, felt compelled to reproduce the speech-headings of his copy exactly; when necessary to justify a line, both altered the forms found in their copy. The following examples will indicate how closely the Folio compositors tended to follow their copy in this respect. Speech-headings for *Puck* appear 32 times in F. The Q forms, followed by the corresponding F forms, appear below.

Q	F	Q	F
Robin. : Rob.	Puc. : Puck.		
Rob. : Rob.	Puck. : Puck.		
Rob. : Rob.	Puck. : Puck.		
Puc. : Puc.	Puck. : Puck.		
Puc. : Puc.	Rob. : Rob.		
Pu. : Pucke.	Rob. : Rob.		
Puck. : Puck.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Ro. : Ro.		
Quin. : Puck.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Rob. : Rob.		
Puck. : Puck.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Rob. : Rob.		
Rob. : Rob.	Puck. : Puck.		
Robin. : Robin.	Robin. : Robin.		
Puck. : Puck.			

In *Love's Labor's Lost*, the speech-headings for *Holofernes* show the same variety, and the Folio compositors reproduce the variation (including aberrant short and long forms) as they do with the *Puck* speech-headings in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Although the subject needs a more thorough investigation than I have yet been able to make, it seems safe to conclude that the Folio compositors followed the speech-headings in their copy fairly closely, and they may be expected to reproduce some of the aberrant forms found in their copy. A comparison of the Q1 and F speech-headings of *Lear* does not reveal such evidence. Except for the fact that both texts generally print in full the names *Kent*, *Lear*, and *Fool*, there is no indication that the F speech-headings derive directly from those in Q1. In fact, it seems that the two texts diverge almost as often as they possibly could in this matter.

Buttressing the evidence of the speech-headings is the spelling of the name *Gonorill* in the two texts. In Q, the name is invariably spelled *Gonorill*, and if more than the first three letters are used in the speech-heading, the fourth letter is invariably an *o*. In F, the name is invariably *Gonerill*, and in speech-headings, if more than the first three letters are used, the fourth letter is invariably an *e*.

It is difficult to believe that two (or more) compositors should have consistently made this spelling change; it is impossible to believe that a corrector of *Q1* should have marked this change throughout the play, even in the speech-headings. It therefore seems safe to conclude that in the copy from which *F* was set, the name was consistently spelled *Gonerill*.

The most striking evidence to support the belief that the *F* text of *Lear* was not set directly from a copy of *Q1* is supplied by *Q2*. Although the significance of this fact has been overlooked, the text of *King Lear* passed through William Jaggard's shop on two occasions. In 1619, about four years before the text was printed in the First Folio, Jaggard printed *Q2* for Thomas Pavier. An analysis of this quarto reveals that it was set by Jaggard's Compositor B. The same spellings that Willoughby used to identify his work in the Folio show that the 1619 quarto of *Lear* is his work. Although the evidence that leads to this conclusion is too bulky to reproduce here, it can be summarized as follows: there are 244 *do*, *go*, *here*, *traitor* forms in the text. Copy spellings influence Compositor B to deviate from his normal spelling habits 54 times; 142 times he alters the spelling in his copy to make it conform to his own spelling habits; 47 times the copy spelling agrees with his own habit and he reproduces it. Only once does he use *doe* when the quarto reads *do*, and this one exception appears as the last word of a full line of prose and was clearly the means he adopted to justify the line.

The 1619 quarto of *Lear* therefore supplies the evidence for what Folio Compositor B would do when he set directly from *Q1* of *Lear*. What he did has little if any resemblance to what he did in those parts of *Lear* set by him four years later. Although in 1619 he modernized the spelling and punctuation of the earlier quarto, there are typographical and orthographical links between the two texts in almost every line. The forms of the speech-headings are closely followed, *Gonorill* is spelled with an *o* throughout, and in spite of hundreds of minor changes in spelling and punctuation, he accurately reproduced the printed text from which he worked. There is little evidence of the carelessness of which he has been accused, and the few errors that he did make are not those which have been attributed to him in the *F* text. The 1619 quarto then illustrates what Compositor B did when he set directly from a copy of *Q1*; the parts of the Folio text for which he was responsible present an entirely different picture. It is therefore necessary to conclude that in those parts of the Folio text for which he was responsible, Compositor B was not setting directly from a corrected copy of *Q1*. If he was not working from a corrected quarto, it necessarily follows that his copy was manuscript.

The final evidence that I shall present here to support my belief that the *F* text of *Lear* was not set directly from *Q1* reveals some characteristics of this manuscript from which the *F* text was set. In the tabulation of the *Gloucester* forms (page 455), it will be noted that the spelling *Glouster* is introduced on 274 and in the next five pages appears for a total of 13 times. The spelling had not appeared earlier in the text; it does not occur later. But more significant is the fact that 12 of these forms are in roman rather than the expected italic type.¹ In short, for a considerable stretch in the text, the normal Folio practice of using italic type for the name of a character appearing in the text does not prevail. For roughly the same portion of the text, italic type is not used for

other forms that we should expect to find in italics. The evidence is again too bulky for complete presentation here, but by listing the occurrences of four names (*Albany*, *Kent*, *Gloucester*, and *Tom*) in the Q and F texts, the significance of the evidence can be shown.

I.i.2	<i>Albany</i> : <i>Albany</i>	II.i.122	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
I.i.27	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	II.iii.20	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>
I.i.35	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>	II.iv.97	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
I.i.48	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	II.iv.97	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
I.i.66	<i>Albaines</i> : <i>Albanies</i>	II.iv.297	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
I.i.57	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.i.21	<i>Albany</i> : <i>Albany</i>
I.i.123	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.iv.42	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>
I.i.89	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.iv.51	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>
I.i.129	<i>Albany</i> : <i>Albanie</i>	III.iv.59	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Toms</i>
I.i.305	<i>Kents</i> : <i>Kents</i>	III.iv.60	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>
I.i.23	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.iv.85	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Tom's</i>
I.i.27	<i>Kens</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.iv.134	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>
I.iv.4	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>	III.iv.145	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Toms</i>
I.v.1	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>	III.iv.152	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Tom's</i>
II.i.28	<i>Albany</i> : <i>Albany</i>	III.iv.168	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
II.i.12	<i>Albany</i> : <i>Albany</i>	III.iv.176	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Tom's</i>
III.v.18	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloucester</i>	IV.ii.85	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>
III.vi.69	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	IV.ii.95	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>
III.vi.74	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	IV.v.9	<i>Glosters</i> : <i>Glousters</i>
III.vi.79	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	IV.vi.116	<i>Glosters</i> : <i>Glousters</i>
III.vii.3	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>	IV.vi.18	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>
III.vii.13	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>	IV.vi.255	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>
III.vii.15	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>	IV.vii.1	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
III.vii.22	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>	V.iii.90	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
IV.i.28	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	V.iii.111	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
IV.i.54	<i>Toms</i> : <i>Toms</i>	V.iii.125	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
IV.i.59	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	V.iii.152	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>
IV.i.81	<i>Tom</i> : <i>Tom</i>	V.iii.232	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
IV.ii.5	<i>Glosters</i> : <i>Glosters</i>	V.iii.238	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
IV.ii.25	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Gloster</i>	V.iii.268	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
IV.ii.71	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>	V.iii.282	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
IV.ii.72	<i>Glosters</i> : <i>Glousters</i>	V.iii.283	<i>Kent</i> : <i>Kent</i>
IV.ii.80	<i>Gloster</i> : <i>Glouster</i>		

It is evident that a change of some sort occurs in Act III, Scene iv, between lines 85 and 134. In III. iv. 120, we find *fiberdegibek* (Q) and *Flibertigibbet* (F). This would suggest that the change occurs between lines 85 and 120. Line 110 is the last line on *G2* in Q. I suggest that it is at this point that the change occurs. It is also evident that from IV. vii. 1 through the end of the play the use of italics for names in the text is reintroduced. The stretch of text in which italic type is frequently not used where we expect to find it begins on 2r3^v, Col. A, line 35; it ends on 2s1, Col. A, line 12. If Compositor B set, as I have suggested, pages 2r3^v-2s3, this change in the use of italics cannot be explained by a shift in compositors and must therefore be explained by a change in the nature of the copy from which Compositor B worked. In the copy from which this section of *Lear* was set, names in the text were not written in Italian script, presumably the equivalent of italic type.

When Greg showed that the F text of *Lear* reproduced readings from uncorrected formes of Q₁,¹³ the direct dependence of F on Q₁ was accepted. There is no question but that Greg demonstrates the dependence of F on Q₁, but the evidence he presents does not prove that the F text of *Lear* was set directly from a copy of Q₁. If F were set, not directly from Q₁, but from a transcript of Q₁ (or parts thereof), the appearance in F of readings from uncorrected formes of the quarto is understandable.

In order to account for the evidence that I have here presented, I advance the following hypothesis. In 1623, the prompt-book of *King Lear* was a conflation of "good" pages from Q₁ supplemented by inserted manuscript leaves to replace corrupt passages of Q₁. Reluctant to let the official prompt-book leave their possession, the company permitted a scribe to make a transcript of this conflated text to serve as copy for the First Folio. Such an hypothesis seems to me to offer a satisfactory solution to some of the many problems of the *Lear* text.¹⁴

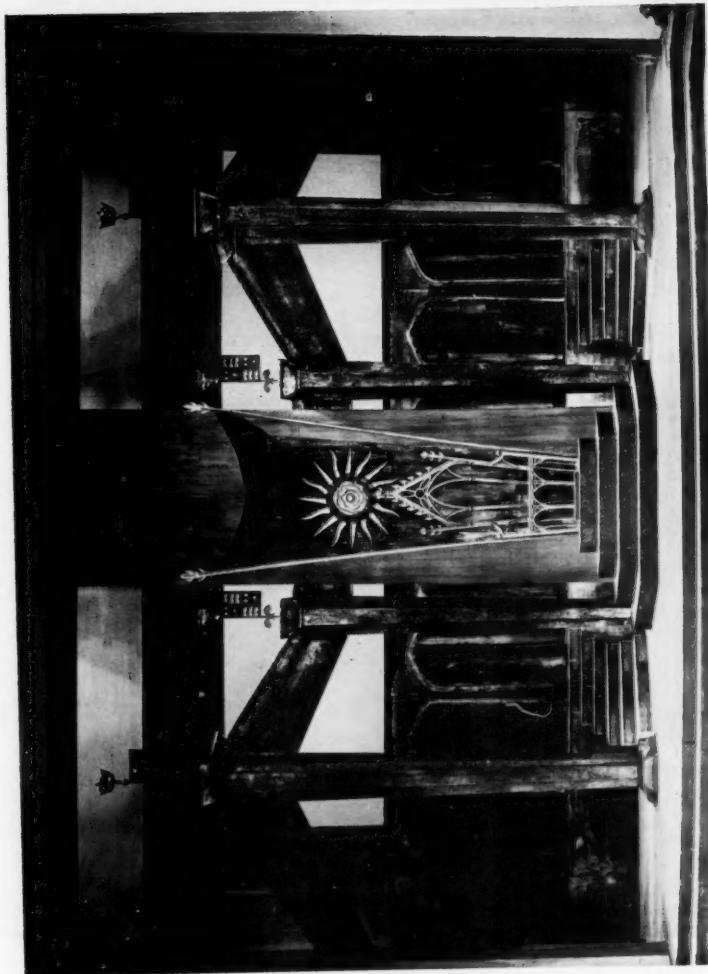
Duke University

¹³ *The Variants*, pp. 13-39. See also *The Editorial Problem*, pp. 88-101.

¹⁴ If the argument that I have presented here is accepted, its implications for other Folio texts should be mentioned. It is now generally held that *Richard III* and *Troilus and Cressida* were, like *Lear*, set directly from corrected quartos. Dr. Alice Walker has recently shown that the F texts of *2 Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* are dependent on the quartos that preceded them. If *Lear* was set not directly from a corrected quarto but from a transcript of such a conflated prompt-book as I have suggested, it seems reasonable to suppose that the copy for other plays that share some if not all of the *Lear* characteristics was prepared in the same way: that is, by making transcripts of quartos that were then in use as prompt-books.



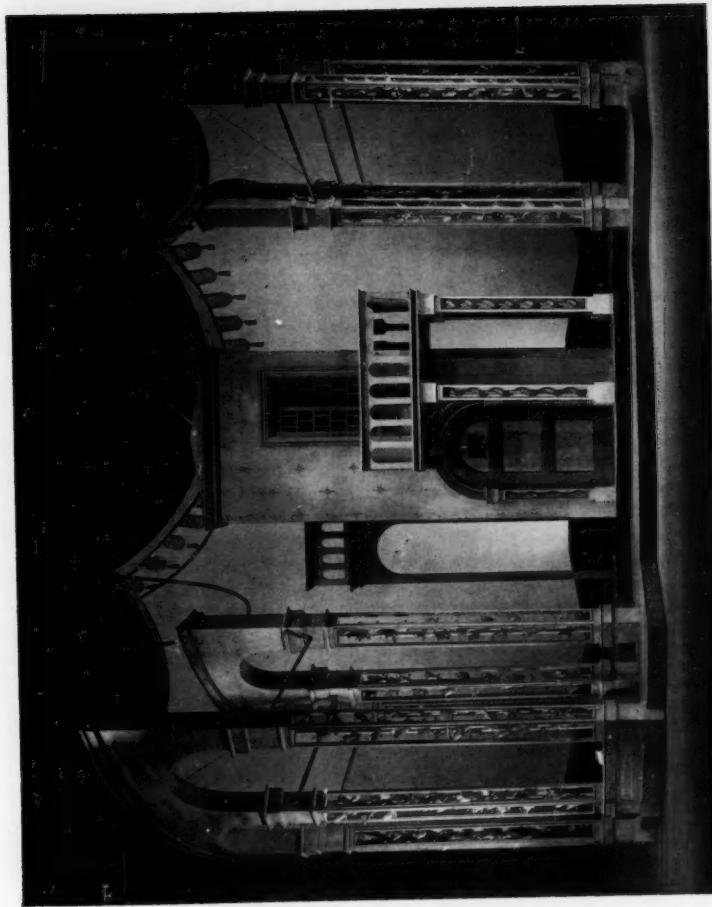
Scene in the 1953 production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford. Photograph by Angus McBean.



Basic setting in the 1953 production of *Richard III* at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford. Photograph by Angus McBean.



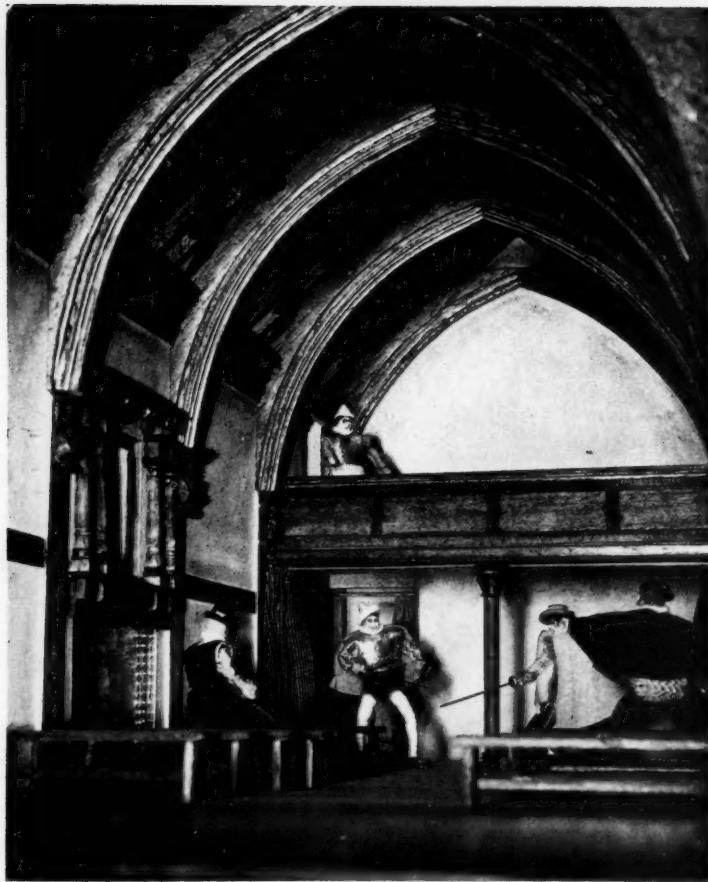
Antony and Cleopatra, Ii, at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford. Photograph by Angus McBean.



Setting for the 1953 production of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford. Photograph by Angus McBean.



King Lear, I, at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford. Photograph by Angus McBean.



Model of Trinity Hall, London, used as a theater from 1557-1568, prepared by Klaus Holm after a contemporary sketch by John Carter. Exhibited in the Yale University Library from April to September 1953 and then incorporated in the collection of theater models in the Brander Matthews Museum, Columbia University. See page 487. Photograph by Yale University News Bureau.

Stratford 1953

CLIFFORD LEECH



THE readiness of the world to come to Stratford, conferring prosperity without precedent on its Memorial Theatre, has this year made it possible for two Stratford companies to function simultaneously: one, under the direction of Mr. Anthony Quayle, is touring in Australia and New Zealand; the other, under Mr. Glen Byam Shaw, has further strengthened Stratford's hold on its own public. The extension of activity has been accompanied by an increased self-confidence in the presentation of this season's plays. One no longer feels, as one did till quite recently, the straining of every nerve to dazzle and bemuse a gaping audience. Rather, one has the impression that the producer of each play has staged it in accord with his own, not a vaguely fancied public's, taste. This has shown itself particularly in the use of stage-settings. Last year the Forest of Arden spread its leafage everywhere and Volpone's house sank, it appeared, into the Grand Canal. This year it has become the normal practice to use a single setting, modified only in detail from scene to scene, for each play. For the most part these settings have been simple: a flight of steps, two slender pillars and a cyclorama for almost the whole of *Antony and Cleopatra*; for *Lear*, a central acting-area projecting well forward, steps on either side, and well back in the center an adaptable stone-structure, used for both throne and hovel; for *Richard III*, a series of sharply pointed arches, making the effect of two triangles pointing down-stage, with their apexes right and left center. The side-doors leading to the fore-stage have in each production been made congruent with the setting, and an attempt has been made to use each door for purposes of localization. In *Richard III*, for example, the door stage-left became associated with the entrance to a place of execution or murder: a flight of steps was visible within it, and the dying Clarence was dragged up them, the young Princes doubtfully ascended, and Buckingham and the rest, passing the silent headsman with his axe, went the same way. In *Lear*, the door stage-right was associated through many of the early scenes with the door to Gloucester's castle. In other scenes, of course, it was used for other purposes, and some spectators considered that this blurred the effect. Yet it seems likely that here the Memorial Theatre was near Elizabethan stage-practice. In a Shakespeare play an association of doors with localities can be intermittently set up: at the Globe, even more than at Stratford, it would be difficult to reserve one door exclusively for one locality, yet where one place was returned to several times it would be useful to associate it with a particular door. Our minds in the theater should be flexible enough for us not to be disturbed because the door of Gloucester's castle was in *Lear* an entrance

to Lear's court and in V.i the place whence Edgar came to challenge Edmund. There was a similar association of the door stage-left with Albany's castle.

In settings better adapted for Shakespearian performances than have formerly been known at this theater, it is not surprising that the text was allowed to have its effect more fully than before. There were, there have to be, cuts. It was odd to find, in a production that in general did not shrink from the wild laughter that goes along with and reinforces the terror of *Lear*, an omission of the King's "I here take my oath before this honourable assembly she kick'd the poor King her father." But in none of this year's plays did one feel that the total effect was falsified by the cutting or by the addition of ceremonial parade. Stratford has come a long way from the Portuguese *Romeo and Juliet*, the Byzantine *Winter's Tale*, the Victorian *Hamlet*, the skilfully trimmed *Measure for Measure* of quite recent years. This does not mean that a producer's legitimate exercise of fancy, within the framework of the play's given world, has been altogether inhibited. In Mr. George Devine's handling of *The Taming of the Shrew*, the *A Shrew* ending was employed and, when Sly had spoken his last words, the strolling players came across the stage, leaving the lord's house and, wearied with their craft, making their way to bed. Sly gazed at them, puzzled and half-guessing, as the curtain came down. The effect was not labored, and it gave to the rough *A Shrew* text a hint of the formal and the human that had its own delight. Perhaps it was more in the spirit of *Twelfth Night* than of *The Shrew*, but even in Shakespeare we should not too busily multiply distinctions. So, too, at the end of Mr. Denis Carey's production of *The Merchant of Venice* the three pairs of lovers gaily left the stage, Antonio half-forgotten: he followed them slowly, with a suggestion of his persistent melancholy: then, with a shrug, fitted himself to the mood of rejoicing, twirled his stick, and moved more briskly. It complicated the final mood for an instant, but the complications were basically Shakespeare's and were only given a more overt expression than the playwright's words at this moment provide. A perhaps questionable touch was introduced by Mr. Devine into the end of *Lear*, III.vi. The Fool, increasingly exhausted during the storm-scenes, uses his last remnant of energy in helping to lift the King from his rough couch: then he is left behind on the stage, except for the disguised Edgar crouching apart: he attempts to follow, but staggers out of sight to the back of the stage. The audience is clearly meant to assume his death at this point. It is moving, but perhaps it distracts attention from Lear's condition, and the silence of the text makes it difficult to believe that Shakespeare could at this point have had the Fool's death in mind. It would appear more likely that he should disappear unobserved from the play. One was more put out by Mr. Carey's staging of the casket-scenes in *The Merchant of Venice*. Not only was the stage well filled with attendants, but the caskets were held by three lively small boys, ready to romp with one another when Portia's or Nerissa's eye was remote. This strained our credulity, for we could not accept that a secret in such hands was safe. The story of the caskets belongs to a fantastic world, but occasions for doubt should not be strewn in our way. A producer who gave it a solemn and remote atmosphere, with only Portia, Nerissa and the suitor on the stage, would win and hold our faith more surely. On the other hand, Mr. Carey did not follow the custom of bringing Shylock back on to the stage at the end of II.vi,

and thus avoided at that point a suggestion of the tragic that often stultifies the effect of the following scene of Morocco's choice. In general, in fact, the producer's ingenuity was kept within bounds at Stratford this year, and was distinguished by care and intelligence.

The season's repertory was varied and ambitious. Two major tragedies were essayed in *Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*; in contrast there were two favourites among the comedies, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice*, and the early but triumphant history play of *Richard III*. The comedies, as was perhaps inevitable, gave the greatest pleasure to the greatest number. *The Shrew*, set—after the Induction—in the great hall of a lord's house, attempted no romanticizing of Katherina: she was simply a shrew successfully tamed, and the jest was found good: before her final entry Petruchio silently prayed, and the audience was delighted to find that his methods were crowned with success. It was delighted too by the antics of Sly, who was often caught up in the action as he wandered in his interest and excitement from one part of the hall to another. The atmosphere was that of an Elizabethan jest-book, and the playing had a becoming lack of subtlety. Miss Yvonne Mitchell and Mr. Marius Goring took their opportunities with vigour, though perhaps Mr. Goring, when he spoke from the balcony the concluding soliloquy of IV.i, was a shade portentous. That the producer and the actors had difficulty in interesting us in the Bianca-story was hardly their responsibility. *The Merchant* was given a brilliant production. Its basic setting—a central door with a window and balcony above, encompassed by movable structures of pillars joined by arches—was graceful and adaptable. Mr. Michael Redgrave's Shylock had a naturalness of accent and gesture that did not obscure the strength and life of the figure. Without contriving the easy transformation into a tragic character, Mr. Redgrave forced us to recognize that the unlikable can yet be powerfully human. The same note was struck by Mr. Harry Andrews as Antonio, a character who on this occasion won more of our sympathy than usual. In fact, so close was one to an atmosphere of reality in the first scene that, with of course the advantage of knowing the playwright's text, one was particularly conscious of Bassanio's silence concerning the way in which Portia was in fact to be won. Generally in productions of this play one is too far from actuality to be puzzled by such matters. But at Belmont there was Portia, played by Miss Peggy Ashcroft with such grace and directness and good humour that one would be prepared to accept for truth almost any midsummer's dream or winter's story of which she was part. Portia, with her delight in mocking her suitors, her steadfast acceptance of ceremonial, her readiness to love wholly, demands for her just playing exceptional qualities of mind and taste: at Belmont the character has a delicate interplay of love and dignity and merriment, but she has also to masquerade as the young lawyer and, when she returns to Belmont, to play the simple comedy of the rings. Miss Ashcroft in the trial-scene could act the *deus ex machina* with conviction, yet at the same time suggested a girl enjoying and amazed by her own audacity. This helped when she had to pretend anger with Bassanio for giving away his ring, and if here perhaps she became a little more pert than fitted the earlier presentation of the character, we have to recognize that the play is not quite thoroughbred.

The theater's status must ultimately depend on its major undertakings,

and this year's *Antony* and *Lear*, though productions of quality, fell just short of the first rank. *Antony*, as we have seen, was staged simply and effectively, and its four leading parts were played with manifest intelligence. Mr. Redgrave, as always, made us realize how much thought he had given to the understanding of every line, the significance of every gesture. He was an impressive figure, too, and yet not afraid to bring out Antony's successive humiliations. Miss Ashcroft, moving outside her normal range, had a firm grasp of the early scenes where Cleopatra enjoys her power and is tortured when she knows its limits. Yet, with both these players, there was a suggestion of effort, as if they could understand but could not fully become the Egyptian dish and its greedy devourer. Mr. Marius Goring, pale in austere robes, sharply portrayed Octavius, though this part is too little varied for its effect to be easily maintained. The Enobarbus of Mr. Harry Andrews had all the roughness and the feeling of the character, and his description of Cleopatra on her barge was admirably fitted to the rest of his playing. Up to the death of Antony, the production as a whole seemed finely acted but, in its two principals, not perfectly cast. Thereafter, from Cleopatra's lamentation to the end, it became an essay in declamation. The writer of an article in *The Times* of 18 June 1953 pointed out that, in this production and in that at the St. James's Theatre, London, in 1951, Cleopatra died sitting on her throne, though the text strongly hints that she should entertain death in the bed she has so long graced. This stage-practice, used also when Mrs. Langtry played the part in 1890, may be, it was suggested, derived ultimately from the corresponding scene in *All for Love*. Whether or not this conjecture is right, the use of the throne at Stratford was symptomatic of the over-ritualized manner which dominated the presentation. The Clown with the asps was kept under restraint, and Caesar's comment that "She hath the purs'd conclusions infinite Of easy ways to die," with its air of detached appraisal, was cut. On the other hand, the Seleucus-incident was left in, jarring with the general effect of Act. V. The play does, perhaps, defy production, and this performance is likely to be the best that most of us will see. But it was strange that one should be so unmoved by the concluding scenes on the stage, so unbelieving in the people and what they did. The tragedy should be much more than the finely spoken pageant that here it became.

Lear, by no means so difficult a play on the stage, was at times moving indeed. Mr. Redgrave played the King in the same naturalistic style as his Shylock. This might be ruinous in an actor less splendidly endowed, but here there was authority, an impression of great but failing strength, of deep capacity in suffering. His parting with Cordelia, his growing realization of powerlessness, his meeting with the blind Gloucester, his final entry doubtless for many spectators made the text live more fully than ever before. The naturalistic manner led, however, to a remarkable slowing of the tempo in the first scene. This made the play open too ponderously, and in a style where the rhymed speeches of Kent and France were intrusive. The actors, therefore, instead of emphasizing the contrast of manner that the rhyme indicates, seemed shy of the deliberately remote style. But where Mr. Redgrave's approach to his part seemed least rewarding was in the supreme test of the storm-scenes. Here Lear, like Macbeth near the end of his tragedy, almost loses particularity: the character is apprehended as a directly universalized figure, after the manner of

ancient tragedy. Shakespeare never leaves a character in this condition at the end of the play: before we part with them, Lear and Macbeth have returned to the status of particular human beings: they become again people we know, as we know Othello and Cleopatra throughout their histories. So the Lear of the storm-scenes must have more than a King of Britain's authority. Like Oedipus, he is symbol more than man, his grief must be world-sorrow, his suffering more than a particular tempest, the hardness of particular hearts, could occasion. Despite all his gifts, Mr. Redgrave has not the faculty of shedding particularities, his suggestion of suffering is rooted in the immediate cause. In seeing his performance, one was bound to recall that of Sir John Gielgud at Stratford in 1950, a performance no more moving in the domestic scenes but commanding tragedy's full scope. Yet here one is judging by the severest standards. The production was well served in a number of other roles. Mr. Goring, without working for an easy sympathy, played the Fool's part with an unrelenting affection. His words were made to carry their full meaning: the most casual of spectators was not allowed to take them as fantastic prattle. Kent, Gloucester and Edmund were rightly played on a level near that of common life, but the King's daughters' (despite Goneril's grimly stylized make-up) lacked the elemental quality that should belong to them. Cordelia is more than a sad and loving daughter, her sisters more than grasping and cruel women. It is true that Shakespeare's later treatment of Goneril and Regan, with their quarrelling over Edmund, lowers their status oddly, but before the storm-scenes they must prepare the way for Lear's darkness. In this production they belonged more to the world of *Père Goriot* than to that of Shakespeare's play.

For many people *Richard III* had this year a special interest. At the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and afterwards at the Old Vic, Sir Barry Jackson has recently presented the three parts of *Henry VI* and has demonstrated how much of theatrical craft went into the writing of those plays. Here Stratford was offering their manifest sequel, yet a sequel more carefully designed, a sequel that could make its separate impact. The speed and good theatrical speaking that characterised the Birmingham performances were evident at Stratford too. It is now apparent that an audience will respond to all these early histories if the words are audible and the production does not lag. Some members of this year's Shakespeare Conference had faults to find with this *Richard*—Mr. Goring allowed himself a touch of self-pity, he was Tartuffe more than the Tudor ogre, there was an insufficient stylization in the scenes of lamenting and ghostly manifestation—but, though these criticisms were valid enough, it was a delight to find actors so ready to play to the top of their bent, and spectators so ready to be excited. The wooing-scene of I.ii is incredible in print, incredible if acted as realistic drama, but if Richard and the Lady Anne cultivate the large and passionate utterance, if their gestures make the more knowledgeable among the audience think in terms of Alleyn and Hieronimo, it can be a triumph and can set the tone for the rest of the play. In the hands of Mr. Goring and Miss Mitchell, it had that effect at Stratford. The audience was delighted too by the fantastic comedy of III.vii, when Richard, standing "tween two clergymen," wins the hearts of the Lord Mayor and the Citizens. It must be admitted that the play is over-long for its almost unvaried effect to be maintained. For the Elizabethans who responded to the official propaganda,

the ending was doubtless charged with reverence for the good Richmond, but we can hardly expect this magic to work with us. And perhaps Shakespeare has over-complicated his play in suggesting something of human remorse in Richard on the eve of battle. It is difficult for any actor, who has to that point rightly played the part on the lines of vast caricature, to make us believe in this development. Nevertheless, this production should materially strengthen our growing interest in, and admiration for, the early histories.

In commenting on last year's plays at Stratford, I expressed a wish for the emergence of a "Stratford style" which might take the place of the chance medley so frequently encountered in this theater. This year there have been hints that such a style is forming. The staging has not attempted to draw attention from the text, the words have been well spoken, and variations in the manner of presenting have depended on the character of the plays chosen, not on a producer's whim. More thought, it appears, has gone into these productions, yet it has not been ostentatiously on view. And the audience has responded well to the change. That is encouraging to the sympathetic observer, as one hopes it is to Mr. Quayle and Mr. Byam Shaw.

University of Durham

Reviews

Literature and Psychology. By F. L. LUCAS. London: Cassell and Co., 1951. Pp. 340. \$3.75.

F. L. Lucas, long a distinguished literary critic, is best known to students of Elizabethan Drama as the author of the excellent *Seneca and Elizabethan Tragedy* (1922) and as the editor of the complete *Works* of John Webster (1928). In this his latest work he turn his attention to a subject fascinating to many of the more recent students of literature—the aid that the records of clinical psychologists may give to the understanding of Shakespeare's art.

Lucas begins his treatise with the provocative assertion that many, indeed most, critics misinterpret works of literature because they know too little about human beings. This ignorance, he believes, explains the "loathing" which most writers feel toward their critics. To Walter Savage Landor, for example, they were "the most odious of creeping things"; to Tennyson, "lice in the locks of literature."

Granted, for the sake of the argument, that reviewers and critics are thus unenlightened, how are they to acquire this essential knowledge about life? First, replies Lucas, they must mix more intimately with men in the business of living; but, more important still, they must approach works of literature not by way of history, either social or literary, but by way of psychology. And by "psychology" Lucas means the recent discoveries in the dark recesses of the subconscious mind as they have been brought to light by Sigmund Freud and his disciples. Lucas' admiration for the results of the clinical investigation of all sorts of abnormal behavior is unbounded. "I believe," he exclaims, "that in the long run mankind will have owed yet more to Freud than to Columbus or Newton, or Darwin, or Einstein, let alone Marx."

The author then presents a series of case histories of neurotics especially of those as reported by Freud and by Mrs. Hilda Stekel in her ten-volume work *Störungen des Trieb und Affectlebens* and in her more popular works translated into English as *Techniques of Analytical Psychotherapy* and as *The Education of Parents*. In Lucas' opinion some of these reported cases explain the actions of many of Shakespeare's more enigmatical characters.

For example, the author's study enables him to modify Ernest Jones's solution of Hamlet's mystery. For Jones's idea that the distracted young man is being torn between love and hate of his father, Lucas substitutes the sounder psychopathic explanation that Hamlet is torn between love and hate of his mother. Therefore, his paralysis of will is the result of his loss of a maternal ideal. Lucas' study also enables him to explain Prince Hal's decision to play libertine as an aggressive act against his father. The critic can recognize Lear and Cordelia's relationship as a lovers' quarrel. So *King Lear* is the tragedy of a father's morbid possessiveness toward a favorite daughter. Lucas explains that the murderer Macbeth in dragging retribution upon his own head betrays the obscure forces in the minds of many neurotics who are impelled to court their own ruin. In those disordered mentalities a sense of guilt creates a kind of spiritual blindness that produces exactly the opposite effect from the one expected and hoped for by the sufferer. Iago, Lucas discovers, suffers from what Mrs. Stekel calls the "Judas complex." The term describes a situation in which a man who passionately loves his master discovers that he is less beloved than

others are. This realization provokes the disturbed personality to a pathological state of excessive resentment. This is the state of mind from which spring all Iago's crimes against Othello and Desdemona.

When Lucas comes to treat a figure that Elizabethans themselves would recognize as psychopathic, for instance, Duke Ferdinand in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, he stands on safer ground. The Duke, as everyone knows, suffers from lycanthropy, imagining himself to be a wolf with the hair turned inward. Lucas finds blood brothers to this insane creature in the records of Mrs. Stekel. Among her case histories are men who bark like dogs or crow and scratch the floor like cocks. And he reminds us that Saint-Simon records that the Prince de Condé imagined himself a dog and rolled on the bed of the Maréchale de Noailles and "duly preserved his *bienséances* at prayers—by throwing back his head and barking—only *mutely*." These examples prove to Lucas that Ferdinand's zoanthropy was in no sense the product of Webster's grotesque fantasy, and that the dramatist's association of lycanthropy with melancholy was scientific truth.

In later chapters of his volume Lucas applies his critical method to various other literary phenomena outside Shakespeare's plays. In a chapter on Romanticism he suggests that "classicism corresponds very roughly to a dominance of the Super-Ego; romanticism, also very roughly, to a dominance of impulse from the id." Related to this idea is his notion that romanticism at times finds its inspiration in sadism and masochism. In the later chapters of the first part of the book appear many entertaining critical pronouncements, as, for example: "Swinburne, like Macbeth, pursues his own damnation" or "The surrealistic artist seems struggling to psychoanalyze himself in public."

The second part of this volume, entitled "The Judgment of Literature," contains much of more permanent critical value than appears in his exploration of the relation of psychoanalysis to literature. However, the principles he announces there have only a remote relation to Shakespeare.

To American scholars there is little new either in Lucas' enthusiasm for psychoanalytic study or in the specific portraits of neurotics he is able to find in Shakespeare's gallery. In fact, the study he advocates has of late been so thoroughly exploited that it has generated a strong antagonism to all its assumptions. For unless dramatic critics employ with the greatest caution the discoveries of clinical psychologists they are likely to distort the meaning of a Shakespearian play and diminish its importance as a reading of life. For the great Elizabethan dramatist was influenced by more immediate and more compelling concepts than those recently systematized by modern psychologists. If *King Lear* is in essence the story of an old man's morbid attachment to his daughter, it loses all its tragic splendor and all its exalted religious meaning. Similarly, to regard Macbeth merely as a victim of a "Judas complex" is to lose him as a protagonist in the world's greatest story of Crime and Punishment. In brief, the zealous application of psychoanalytic knowledge to the characters in Shakespeare's plays reduces the most comprehensive imaginative vision of human experience in all literature to a mere collection of case histories of neurotics and psychotics.

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Shakespearian Players and Performances. By ARTHUR COLBY SPRAGUE. Harvard University Press, 1953. Pp. [xiv] + 222. \$4.50.

Professor Sprague has set out to recreate some of the famous performances of leading Shakespearian roles by the great actors of the past. He has taken as the basis of each study a particular performance such as that of Hamlet by Betterton when, at the age of 74, he was seen by Steele in the part. Other actors and roles selected are Garrick's final performance of Lear; Kemble's Hamlet and Mrs. Siddons's Lady Macbeth as first played on the London stage; Kean as he played Othello to L. J. Booth's Iago; Edwin Booth as he played Iago to Irving's Othello; Macready's Macbeth in his last appearance on the stage; Irving in his first appearance as Shylock. The two last chapters deal with the revolutionary work of William Poel and with performances witnessed by the author, which bring the story up to date.

It has not been possible to keep strictly to the actual performance selected owing to insufficiency of contemporary material, and Professor Sprague has admitted some later descriptions to fill in the picture. Thus, in discussing Kemble's Hamlet of 1783, he quotes Tieck who saw him at the end of his career, and, in dealing with Mrs. Siddons's Lady Macbeth of 1785, cites an account of her in the role in 1816. Even so, the concentration on a particular point in the actor's development of a part presents a more homogeneous picture of his interpretation than is usually given.

The material has been drawn from sources such as memoirs, essays and reviews, many of which have not previously been used. Contemporary accounts are thinnest for Betterton and fullest for Macready's Macbeth of which there is an act to act description.

The actors' treatment of the text is among the points considered. Thus Betterton, in addition to drastic cuts, "refined" the language according to the standards of his day, sacrificing, in every instance quoted, vividness to clarity and simplicity. Irving's mutilations were in the service of another god, that of "reviving the tone of the era" by local colour through scenic display, a practice rightly stigmatized by Percy Fitzgerald as "quite un-Shakespearian." More subtle was the perversion of Booth who brought down the curtain with a tableau of Iago pointing triumphantly at the dead Othello "and gazing up at the gallery with a malignant smile of satisfied hate." But the other side of the picture is also recorded: the illumination an actor can cast on a scene hard to visualize in the study. One instance cited is how Orson Welles as Brutus, by refusing to declaim-in the oration scene of *Julius Caesar*, brought out the contrast between his appeal to the intellect and Antony's to the emotions.

The history of acting styles has yet to be written but Professor Sprague has here laid the foundations for it. We follow the differing emphases that the great actors laid on speech, gesture and facial expression, and the varying views of their art that influenced their interpretations. Formal acting, little in favor today, is defended by Professor Sprague, who points out that Shakespeare "characteristically, and not in his youthful plays alone, counts upon subtle stylistic transitions and contrasts the effect of which will be lost if we play him with the single ideal of naturalness." In the general descriptions of the style of the various actors there are some surprises. Thus Kemble's statuesque classicism was tempered by sudden contrasts of the familiar and even the passionate, and the highly emotional Kean spoke his lines every night with exactly the same accent and rhythm as though "from a musical score."

Poel's return to the Elizabethan type of stage emphasized the masterliness of Shakespeare's dramatic technique and, by demonstrating that the plays

could be trusted, shifted the weight back from actor to dramatist. His influence is in the ascendant, yet Professor Sprague's own playgoing experience has proved to him that the danger to Shakespeare still exists, though it now comes from the elaborations of the director. He rightly pleads for more training in Shakespearian acting and more attention, above all, to the art of speaking verse.

This book should be on the shelves of all who believe that Shakespeare's most complete fulfillment is on the stage. It makes clear that there is no final way to act or present his plays; each actor and each age find their own and add to our understanding. By showing us such a variety of possibilities Professor Sprague has done invaluable service.

His book is well illustrated, particularly striking being the picture of Kean as Shylock, which conveys, more than any description, his searing quality.

SYBIL ROSENFIELD

London

Hamlet: a Tragedy Adapted from Shakespeare (1770) by Jean François Ducis. A Critical Edition. By MARY B. VANDERHOOF. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 97, no. 1, February, 1953. Pp. 55, double columns.

In the seventeenth century *Hamlet* was unknown in France except for the fact that there were two copies of the tragedy in French libraries. No comment upon them has survived.¹ The first critical remarks, apart from translations, appeared in the *Journal littéraire* of 1717. After this the most important step was taken by La Place, whose *Théâtre Anglois* of 1745-49 included an incomplete translation of *Hamlet*. But as yet there was no French version that could be acted. This lack was supplied by Ducis, whose adaptation of *Hamlet* was first acted at the Comédie Française on September 30, 1769. It was his version, rather than Shakespeare's, that was translated into Italian, Spanish, and Dutch and was acted in Sweden.

Though the work of Ducis has excited considerable interest, most critics who have concerned themselves with the tragedy have employed nineteenth-century editions, which are far from representing the original form of the play. This fact was first pointed out by Mr. B. W. Downs,² who, however, did not note that the first edition did not reproduce the form that was first acted. What this was has been discovered by Miss Vanderhoof, who found among documents concerned with Ducis in the library of the Comédie Française the manuscript that corresponds to statements made by Diderot and Collé about the first form of the play, one that they saw acted. It seems probable that the first printed form came into existence in December, 1769, when, according to the registers of the Comédie Française, a new fifth act was presented to the public. It was published in 1770, reprinted in 1776, 1778, 1783, and 1789, and revised by Ducis in 1809 and in 1813. Miss Vanderhoof decided to reproduce the most important text, that of 1770, no copy of which, other than hers, is in America so far as she has been able to determine. She gives variants from the manuscript and from the editions of 1809 and 1813.

Ducis, who knew no English, drew his knowledge of the play from La Place's translation, but he was obliged to alter the text greatly in order to make it conform to French usage in regard to unities and proprieties. He wrote

¹ Despite statements of the late Ambassador Jusserand to the contrary; cf. my article in *Modern Language Notes* LXIII (December, 1948), 509-512.

² *Modern Language Review*, XXXI (1936), 206-208.

Garrick that he could not put on the French stage a loquacious ghost, country actors, or a duel. He allows Claudius to be a prince of the blood, but not the brother of the murdered monarch, and makes him the father of Ophelia, who is much more like Corneille's heroines than Shakespeare's. Her marriage was opposed by the late king, much as that of Aricie was by Theseus in *Phèdre*. Gertrude has, with the complicity of Claudius, poisoned her husband. She feels remorse for her deed, has not married Claudius, and wishes her son to reign. Hamlet, who is depressed, but sane, tests his mother, not with a play, but with an urn, inherited from Sophocles and Voltaire. It is he alone who sees the ghost and converses with him. His friend Horatio is called Norreste. Polonius is a mere confidant. Laertes, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern have disappeared.

At the end of the manuscript Gertrude kills herself after Claudius has committed suicide off stage. In the 1770 version Claudius murders Gertrude between Acts IV and V; in V.vi., he shows her body to Hamlet, who promptly kills him. In later versions this murder takes place before Gertrude's suicide. It is in the edition of 1809 that the test by reference to the King of England first occurs. There, too, is found the first translation of the soliloquy.

Miss Vanderhoof makes a similar and more detailed comparison among the editions, shows how little Ducis owes to La Place, and reproduces the criticisms of Collé, Diderot, Fréron, a writer in the *Mercure*, and a young man who published an amusing letter in 1769, one that has not been mentioned in earlier studies of the play. The text that follows is accurately reproduced, with variants in the notes and in eight appendices. The work certainly makes a valuable addition to our knowledge of Shakespeare's fame on the European mainland. Without it no one can study properly the fortunes of *Hamlet*.

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King Lear (New Arden Shakespeare). Edited by KENNETH MUIR. Harvard University Press, 1953. Pp. lxiv + 256. \$4.25.

The Arden Shakespeare series is not designed for the specialist but for the school and university student, and for the general reader. Its actual usefulness has wider bounds, however, for it is almost unique in the convenience of its full notes to the text and in the amount of critical, illustrative, and textual material contained there and in the introductions and appendices. Thus despite its relatively moderate aims, the Arden nevertheless finds itself in the position of being judged as a standard edition of relatively high authority. This is inevitable, for it is an extremely handy compendium of information; moreover, its wide use for educational purposes means that a number of people both in England and in America are going to make their first close and intelligent acquaintance with Shakespeare from it, and hence its influence in molding opinion among non-professional readers is strong. Once impregnated with a critical opinion of Shakespeare's plays from study of the Arden volumes, the great class of readers will be inclined, psychologically, to view any different set of interpretations with the suspicion or the dis-ease accompanying the unfamiliar. This responsibility has been felt by the general editor and has led to a planned continuance of the original Arden conservatism in critique and annotation, in contrast to the greater degree of individual interpretation of literary, historical, and

textual matters permitted, say, the New Cambridge series. The Arden revision has not been designed to break new ground, but instead to consolidate and synthesize the advances made in Shakespeare scholarship since the appearance many years ago of the original volumes.

Any series which comes from the hands of a multiplicity of editors is bound to be uneven in quality, for no editor can avoid placing the imprint of his own personality and mental equipment on his material. However, in assessing the value of any separate volume it is necessary to distinguish how an editor has operated within the framework established for the series and not to blame him for conforming in some details to an editorial formula laid out for him, one which has perhaps ill-advisedly retained some features of the original Arden of dubious value today. The general plan seems to be that of a synthesis, a correlation of the best that is accepted today. The editor should, therefore, stand in the position of honest broker to his readers, one bound to give both sides of the case for matters still seriously in dispute. Unlike the Olympian detachment of the Variorum editors, his own views are not tied to the historical formula, however, and they may operate to tilt the balance between two mighty opposites; but at least conflicting opinions are heard when it is worthwhile to present more than one side. Evidence may thus be evaluated under the general guidance of the editor, and though it is too much to expect that every problem will be solved, at least a reader should ideally be given a clear view of the difficulty, the suggested solutions, and—often usefully—some hint as to what the editor feels is the advisable line to take. This purpose of summation and conservative treatment does not necessarily make the editor a faceless man; but it should powerfully operate to restrain the excesses of individualistic personal criticism from him accompanied by the undue coloring of his material for an audience which in general is not in a position to assess the difference between his solidly based views and those which under pressure he might be inclined to disclaim as having any considerable authority.

When against these editorial requirements one comes to survey the present *King Lear* volume edited by Kenneth Muir, some disappointment is likely to meet one's expectations. The general editor has rightly removed responsibility from the individual editors to carry ahead specific investigations of the text and its problems beyond the reach of present-day accepted opinion. Clearly, we cannot expect every Arden editor to be such a highly trained textual expert as to be capable of this delicate operation, often one beyond their previous experience; nor is the speculative element inevitably associated with such forms of investigation wholly suited to the guiding principle that the chief function of the editors is to consolidate the advances of scholarship since the original Arden. In fact, to expect each individual Arden editor to take it upon himself to establish a text which for the present day will have the definitiveness possessed in its day by the Old Cambridge text is an absurd proposition. On the other hand, since the new Arden has, wisely, cut away from the older series' dependence upon a single established text, in default of a present-day text with the authority for its time of the Old Cambridge, a particular responsibility is laid upon the current editors to understand contemporary textual theory and to apply it wisely in contriving their own texts.

For various reasons *King Lear* is one of a handful of Shakespearian texts which present really serious difficulty. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Professor Muir being no textual expert, his comprehension of the textual problem and its implications is seriously deficient, and that as a result he has failed to apply to the text the advanced criteria which scholarship now requires. There is every

implication from his Preface that his text does not differ materially from that he made up fifteen years before for an amateur production. The keynote to his textual naiveté is found in the following quotation from this Preface: "It has recently been suggested that a study of all the extant copies of the First Folio would reveal variants comparable in importance with those in the extant copies of the First Quarto. As no evidence has yet been produced that the Folio is made up of corrected and uncorrected sheets, I am skeptical of this theory; but I have consulted facsimiles of two different copies of the Folio as well as the two originals accessible in Leeds, without discovering any variants." If this somewhat murkily written statement is to be taken at its face value, it must mean that Muir is skeptical that any sheets were press-corrected anywhere in the Folio, not just in *Lear*. If so, he has not read Willoughby's early study of the First Folio, which contains an example of a proof-sheet, or Hinman's articles on the discovery of two more proof-sheets, despite the fact that two of these three investigations were published in England. On the other hand, if he actually intended to express skepticism only about press-correction in the Folio *King Lear*, his appeal to a lack of published information as grounds is not convincing, since no such investigation has yet been made and published. It was bad luck that he found no variants in the four copies he collated, since in fact such variants do exist in *Lear*, as one would expect from some knowledge we have of other plays. Parenthetically, one might remark that whoever suggested to Muir (his edition is full of these anonymous "suggestions") that the Folio might contain variants of comparable importance to those in the quarto was imposing his own naiveté on Muir's ignorance, since the variants in the Folio which have been determined to date (so far as we know from published sources) are chiefly concerned with typographical details; and the differences in the printing of the two books, in connection also with the differences in the nature of the printer's copy for each, do not encourage a belief that anything world-shaking will be found in *King Lear* when the Folio is fully collated.

The section of the Introduction treating the textual problem and Muir's method of dealing with it will leave a reader little the wiser. Doran and Ridley are quite wrongly put in the position of arguing for the "substantial" or substantive superiority of the Q text over F, and Muir is unaware that Greg has withdrawn his stenographic hypothesis. The reader is given a condensed summary of the memorial reconstruction theory for Q but without adequate reference to other such texts; and at the end may well be left puzzled when after quoting Kirschbaum's pertinent objections to Duthie's hypothesis of an authorized group reconstruction, the editor remarks only that the force of these may be felt without necessarily adopting Kirschbaum's alternative hypothesis of a single reporter. As a consequence what specific view of the origin of the Q text Muir himself has adopted—for without one no editor of *King Lear* can be consistent in his editorial method given the fact that the authority of any specific reading of Q is intimately involved—cannot be determined from his Introduction; and in fact it later becomes clear that he has no consistent editorial method other than a subjective one.

Also, since he fails to give the reader any information about the speculations which have been made about the relation of the prompt book to Shakespeare's autograph, he is in no position to evaluate the specific authority of F in any given instance. As a result, his account of possible failings in the F text is a most untrustworthy guide for the general reader. Without citation of examples he states that "the F texts of other plays contain numerous errors and 'sophistications' (i.e. unauthorized 'improvements')" and hence he is prepared to accept

for *King Lear* those Q readings "not only where the F readings are manifestly corrupt, but also where Q seems palpably superior. It is not impossible that true readings were preserved by the memories of actors, and so reproduced in Q, though by some accident they have not been preserved in F." There is here no recognition of the fact that F sophistications in other plays may have arisen out of a different textual history from that of *King Lear* so that the cases may not be truly parallel. But granting the essential truth of his statement, a reader is scarcely enlightened by the brief dismissal of "by some accident" to the very important questions of how (except in theatrically cut passages, on which he makes no comment) F does occasionally omit or alter what seem to be true Shakespearian readings found in Q. The case is further confused when with no transition to bridge the incoherent logic, Muir immediately proceeds to explain these F deficiencies not by the "accident" theory just stated but instead by an appeal to the unproved and now discredited theory of "continuous copy," arguing that in the fourteen years that elapsed between Q and F, errors and deliberate changes "would have been made" in the prompt book.

If an editor, as here, is unable to envisage or to evaluate both scribal and compositorial alteration in the physical process of *King Lear*'s textual transmission, and hence assigns every F reading he does not like and every Q addition which appeals to him as due to an unauthorized alteration in the prompt copy by some unspecified hypothetical agent, he is scarcely prepared to embark on the perilous seas of constructing a text of the play. An editor's judgment is the court of final appeal, it is true, and no mechanical editorial method or bibliographical preparation can diminish its fundamental importance. But the difference between the unprincipled eclecticism of early editors of Shakespeare and the deliberate eclecticism of advanced textual scholars of today rests on the single point that today an editor must submit his reliance on personal or on collective judgment to the test of bibliographical probabilities, which will necessarily differ with each text according to the reconstruction which is made of the history of its transmission. It is not enough to choose correctly, as Muir has done, the Folio as one's copy-text and then to play ducks and drakes with it according to one's personal tastes. Any editor of *King Lear* must be prepared to admit various Q readings in preference or in supplement to those of F. But he has failed in editorial discipline and must necessarily operate without fixed principles if before he does so he is not prepared to explain to himself the mechanical reasons how F omitted or altered for the worse a Q reading in each specific instance before such a reading is adopted.

Muir, working in the old tradition of personal taste as the deciding factor, has no inkling of this necessary rigorous examination. It would be interesting, for example, to know why his personal judgment prefers Q *Liege* to F *Lord* at I.i.35 as "palpably superior." At I.i.239 he follows Pope in modernizing the concord of the QF verb *stands* to *stand* on the trivial grounds that "the line sounds better without the s"; but he fails to perceive that there is at least some possibility that concord obtains in QF and that the subject of the verb might be *love* in the line above rather than *regards* in the same line. At II.ii.1 he substitutes F *dawning* for Q (uncorrected) *deuen*, i.e., *dauen*, although apparently believing that "the F reading was a substitution of a more common form of the word." If so, the substitution would be an F sophistication which should have been rejected. At I.i.163 he rejects from Q what is clearly an actor's hypermetrical expansion, the addition of *Doe* (with a necessary stop which is not provided) before *Kill*; but is curiously so uncertain of his ground that he has a special note: "this may be a F omission, or an actor's addition." He automatically

cally assumes elsewhere that anything an actor adds must be inferior, and thus detectable. Yet at I.ii.140 he accepts Q's *Edgar*—and before Edgar's entrance, which is certainly suspicious, without troubling to enquire under what circumstances F would omit these words and begin "Pat he comes. . ." At II.iv.19-20 he conflates F with two Q lines on the grounds "the two speeches omitted by F are so effective in their context that it is difficult to believe they were added by the actors." If this is true, the failure of F to reproduce them is most probably due to the compositor, but before accepting them an editor would be advised to compare other examples of eye-skip in F to see if conditions were similar here. But the notion that actors could not have invented this prolongation of the debate between Kent and Lear is far from demonstrable. As in I.i.146 he will reach up to F₄ to justify an elision like *would'st* for F₁ *wouldest* despite the fact that no early text is at all consistent in elision, and readers (as well as actors) are quite prepared to adjust themselves to the fuller forms in print. At I.ii.67 he adopts a question mark from Q for F period without a note to warn a reader that in early usage the Q query could also stand for an exclamation point, a matter of some importance here. These are only a scattering of examples drawn from a small section of text to illustrate the inconsistency of approach and therefore the general unreliability of the subjective method of editing which Muir represents.

There is also some carelessness which does not inspire confidence in the editor's accuracy. Doubtless as the result of a change of opinion in the course of preparing the text, at I.i.216 he is entangled in an egregious contradiction. Here he prints as "palpably superior" the Q reading "Most best, most dearest," but the collation note gives as the lemma the rejected F reading "The best, the dearest"; and the annotative note argues in favor of the F reading even though it may be a "sophistication." By chance I happened to notice other examples of careless proofreading, though of a mechanical sort. In I.i.78 a variant in the collation notes is wrongly assigned to line 77, and on page 31 the line number 130 is placed after line 131. Scrupulous collation, which I have not undertaken, would very likely expose a number of deficiencies in the fullness and accuracy of the collational notes.

The textual apparatus has no more consistent principles than the text. One may seriously query the usefulness of the Arden listing of rejected unauthoritative variants from late quartos and F₂₋₄ for the benefit of students, this perhaps in deference to the old editorial theory that one could pick and choose among such variants as one liked and thus second-guess the editor. But even given the fact that an Arden editor is required to follow this procedure, there is little system in Muir's irrational choice of some variants to list (never with fullness or consistency) such as the record at I.i.64 of a forged Collier reading; a misprint in Q₃ of long f for f in *fit-sit* at I.i.97; the Q₁ spelling-variant *Happely* at I.i.100 for F *Happily*; of F *Dowres* at I.i.128 for text's modernized spelling *dowers*; F₄ *sixth* for F₁ *sixt* at I.i.175; or the record that for F₁ *prefer*, F₂ reads *perfer* at I.i.274; and so on. Even if all this textual rubbish could by any stretch of the imagination be of use to a student, or to anyone else (given the Variorum apparatus), only arbitrary selection (if there is any principle) has been made from such material. Moreover, although such late editions as Q₃ are collated, nowhere in the volume is Q₃ mentioned and any account given as a guide of its date or the source and authority of its text. Recorded emendations from editors are referred to by their names, a necessary convenience in collation notes of annotations. Nevertheless, no list is provided of the initials or first names of these editors and the dates of their editions. A student who would

like to trace down the original arguments for "top the legitimate," for example, is referred simply to "Capell (Edwards conj.)," which is scarcely informative in the absence of a list of editions referred to. Nor is it very helpful in the note to I.i.215-221 to read merely that "Maxwell, following Delius, interprets . . ." It is an even more serious matter that lacking such a list a student has no possible means of determining what editors have in fact been collated for variant readings and therefore how complete has been the collateral listing of their rejected emendations; nor is any statement made about what principle, if any, has been adopted for the selection of their variants to list.

The account of the sources of the play and its history is sufficiently workmanlike though marred by excessive notation of foolish theories, as in footnote 1 on page xxiv, not always pertinent to the matter at hand and certainly of a cast which an editor of more rigorous critical fiber would omit without a qualm. It is also debatable whether one is wise to put into the heads of inexperienced students such romancing as that on page xxxii in which the suggestion is made that Shakespeare might have acted the part of Perillus in the old *King Leir*. In fact it is bad enough to argue seriously that even if only a spectator Shakespeare must have retained in his memory various details of the old play, including a precise recollection of various "chance phrases." The intrusion of such unsupported speculations in a textbook is scarcely to be encouraged.

One of the chief points of usefulness in the Arden series lies in its annotative and illustrative notes. In this volume these display a remarkable lack of discrimination in view of the public for which they are presumably designed. The authority for the glossing of words is seldom apparent and is sometimes suspiciously drawn from the context, without indication whether or not there is precedent for the usage. For example, at I.i.214, if for metrical reasons one accepts the interpolation of Q *best before object* (though even if a word is missing, *best* is suspiciously like a memorial anticipation of the third line below it), it may be that Muir's glossing of *your best object* as the "main object of love" is strictly accurate, but one would like to see analogues. It is always difficult for an editor to avoid superfluous annotation while missing nothing that might cause real difficulty; but, as at I.i.227, it is scarcely worth the space to argue against a rejected Collier emendation which is simultaneously described as "unnecessary and absurd." It is not clear why this rather than the dozens of other unnecessary and absurd emendations of early editors was singled out for eleven lines of comment; nor is it clear why it was thought useful to mention at I.i.258 a singularly foolish emendation proposed in *Notes and Queries* in 1909. It is perhaps not over helpful at I.ii.76 to find in the same series both *abhorred* and *detested* glossed unimaginatively (and repetitiously) merely as "detestable." Whether in I.i.86 *gap* requires glossing as "breach" is debatable. Given the amount of superfluous annotation, it would have been well to have annotated I.ii.115 to explain by forward reference to line 147 what is meant in the text by "the prediction." Although at I.i.21 *knav* is glossed as "fellow—not implying moral disapproval," the less familiar *whoreson* three lines below is passed over without comment.

But whatever the inconsistencies of selection, a large number of the chosen annotations reveal a wilful haring after the idly speculative carried almost to the point of a disease, without consideration of the Arden audience's requirement for a discriminatory common sense in the editorial point of view. As in the typical note to I.i.36 there is throughout an excessive reproduction of the metaphysical interpretations of the school of Empson and Knight, which taken out of context and addressed to an Arden reader can be either gnomic in intent

or the source of much misapprehension. It is doubtful whether in an edition like this (or in any edition) an editor should record, as Muir frequently does, the private speculations turned over to him which have not passed the acid test of print. A notable example comes at I.i.122 where there is not the least difficulty with "Come not between the Dragon and his wrath," but where for some mysterious reason a pother is made about the meaning, ending with 15 lines of a private communication from J. C. Maxwell which is remarkably far-fetched. Elsewhere Muir's reliance on a school of critics not noted for their familiarity with Elizabethan usage as a check to speculation is well illustrated by the note to "this last surrender" at I.i.305, in which Empson is quoted, "a curious remark that seems to imply previous renunciations." The note is then concluded with the ambivalent editorial comment, "This is to consider too curiously." How such a note can explicate the text is difficult to comprehend. A simple gloss that *last*, as conventionally, means *late* is surely all that is required without confusing a reader by the reproduction of Empson's misunderstanding that it here means *latest*.

What has become the classic case of editorial irresponsibility, however, appears in a reproduction of a peculiarly wilful "private suggestion" that "Pray you, undo this button" at V.iii.309 refers to one of Cordelia's buttons. The case for such a note is not improved materially by the editor's own tag, "but I think this unlikely." If unlikely, there was certainly no use in printing such an idle informal communication in an Arden edition. As a result, however, the letter column of the *Times Literary Supplement* hashed this over at great length until Muir was finally forced to bring the matter to a close by an extended letter giving in considerable detail all the reasons why he thought the suggestion to have been wrong. His arguments were so conclusive that they might have convinced him beforehand that it is an editor's responsibility to shield a reader from just this type of commentary on Shakespeare which one annually flushes down the drain in some quantity.

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Shakespearean Stage Production: Then & Now. By CÉCILE DE BANK. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., (1953). Pp. xviii + 342. \$6.00.

In the contemporary theatre the position of director has become one of major importance. Historically, it evolved out of the old nineteenth-century stage manager function but the modern director's role is considerably more than that of the old stage manager. He is today responsible for the general interpretation of the play to be presented; he is the coach who trains the actors in their roles; and he is the coordinator responsible for the kind of effect which the performance produces upon the audience. When this director-interpreter undertakes the staging of a Shakespearean play, he faces a task of more than usual complexity. His task is to interpret the play through actors and staging in such a way as to bring out to the fullest its effectiveness with a modern audience. He may too often approach this undertaking as though the text of a Shakespearean play were hardly different from the script of a modern work. On the other hand, he may realize that the play, being written for a stage quite unlike ours of today and for an age whose ideas and conceptions are often remote and perplexing, requires considerably more study for its understanding than does a

modern text. When he turns to the scholarly commentaries, he is apt to find himself baffled amidst the vast amount of material and to be confused by the lack of unanimity among the learned interpreters. This range of diverse scholarly knowledge and interpretation can, nevertheless, be an invaluable instrument for the director-interpreter who knows how to use it.

Professor Cécile de Banke's *Shakespearean Stage Production* is a manual designed to assist the director in his search for information and in his use of the great wealth of Shakespearian studies. It is written on the sound assumption that an understanding of a Shakespearian play in the terms in which Shakespeare wrote it is the essential basis on which to build a modern stage interpretation. The book is divided into four major parts, as follows: Part I, Staging; Part II, Actors and Acting; Part III, Costume; Part IV, Music and Dancing. In each Part the author draws upon select secondary sources to present a summary of scholarly information about Elizabethan practice in regard to the respective major subjects. In Part I, for example, she initiates her treatment with a discussion of the "Elizabethan and Jacobean Staging of Shakespeare's Plays," presenting in order the "Events Leading to the Building of the Theatre; Influences Determining the Architectural Plan of the Theatre; Component Parts of the Elizabethan Theatre—Origin and Survival." In the second section of this Part she proceeds to discuss on the basis of the above historical summary, the "Modern Staging of Shakespeare's Plays," followed by section three on "Lighting on Elizabethan and Modern Stages" and section four on "Properties and Sound Effects." Her exposition of the typical Elizabethan theater is based upon John Cranford Adams's *The Globe Theatre* and upon Adams's excellent model of that theater, now in the Folger Shakespeare Library. This Part, as well as the other Parts, is filled with a variety of practical suggestions on the adaptation of the plays to modern staging in the Elizabethan manner or in a modification of that manner. She presents, for example, beginning on page 35, a suggestive listing of scenes from the standard plays that could be played on the fore-stage, the middle stage, the inner stage, the balcony stage, and the tarras of a single-unit setting. A similar table of scenes for the various stages of a combined-unit setting is then given. On page 63 she includes drawings of nine different pieces of Elizabethan stage furniture, and on page 65 are drawings of ten different Elizabethan stage properties. This Part is concluded with a list of "Books for Reference & Reading," listing some eighty-six useful items, some of which are annotated.

Part II, on "Actors and Acting," is the weakest part of the manual, largely because it is practically impossible to deal adequately with this subject in forty-five printed pages. The subject of acting, moreover, does not lend itself readily to textual presentation, as does the subject of staging or that of costuming. Nevertheless, her summary of the historical materials on the Shakespearian actors and acting companies is interestingly presented, and the director will certainly find some useful suggestions in her brief discussion of acting techniques in the presentation of these plays. This Part, like the others, concludes with a useful bibliography, also in part annotated.

Part III, on "Costume," opens with a very concise summary of historical facts about Elizabethan clothing and proceeds to a rather full discussion of Elizabethan costume. There is a useful table of fabrics, beginning on page 153, which includes a listing of modern facsimile or substitute materials. Sixteen pages of detailed drawings of various parts of Elizabethan costumes for men and women, as well as several pages of pictures, are included. Brief but good suggestions are given for the adapting of Elizabethan costume to modern staging. The subject of make-up, however, is dismissed in a very brief paragraph.

One of the limitations of this manual becomes apparent in this Part on

costume. Though Shakespeare without question produced his plays in contemporary dress, a modern producer might not care to present all Shakespearian plays in Elizabethan costume. The Roman plays, for example, might well be more effective in Roman costume and in a setting that is not a reproduction or adaptation of the Globe Theatre stage. Several of the comedies in particular might likewise prove more effective in Renaissance Italian costume than in Elizabethan or Jacobean. To have presented all such possibilities fully, especially with the kind of treatment which the author has adopted, would have swelled her text beyond practicable proportions; nevertheless, a bit more recognition of the various possibilities could have been included within the present treatment and certainly could have been more fully recognized in the bibliographies.

The fourth and last Part of this manual is, I am sure, going to prove especially useful. It is on "Music & Dancing" and is filled with practical suggestions. On pages 228 to 232, inclusive, there appears a well-compiled list of Elizabethan musical instruments, with a description of each, a suggested modern facsimile or substitute, and a statement of its use. In Chapter 4 the Elizabethan dance steps are well described and in Chapter 5 there is a most helpful analysis of music and dance in Shakespeare's plays. In addition to the bibliography, this Part includes a section on "Recordings Available for Use in Elizabethan Stage Production," divided into "Vocal Music," "Instrumental Music," and "Sound Effects." Addresses of manufacturers from whom these recordings may be obtained are given. The book is concluded with a well-prepared index. It is interestingly written and will prove a useful and welcome manual, especially to directors in the academic theater.

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Put Money in Thy Purse: The Diary of the Film of Othello. By MICHEÁL MACLIAMMÓIR. With a Preface by ORSON WELLES. London: Methuen and Company, 1952. Pp. xii + 258, frontispiece and 10 plates. 15s.

It is rare to find a man of the theater so versatile as to be able to express himself in a number of arts. Micheál MacLiammóir, the Irish actor, dramatist, and designer is also painter, a musician of sorts, a respectable poet, and by no means least a writer of sparkling prose. In 1946 he described the founding, with Hilton Edwards, of the Dublin Gate Theatre in *All for Hecuba*, one of the most delightful of theatrical autobiographies. In it he pictured the entrance, *en coup de vent*, of Orson Welles to the stage of the Gate, with which he was briefly associated before leaving to conquer more worlds. When in 1934 Welles was in charge of a summer drama festival at Woodstock, Illinois, he invited MacLiammóir and Edwards to join him in the performance of three plays. One of them was *Hamlet*, in which MacLiammóir had already acted the title role in Dublin, an impersonation which was later to gain him a considerable reputation over a good part of Europe. Though he has played other Shakespearian parts, *Hamlet* is the only one America has seen. It should shortly see another, Iago, to Welles's *Othello*, this time more widely and on film.

Mr. MacLiammóir in addition to his other activities also keeps a diary in Gaelic. Based on it is his present volume, which covers his personal experiences from January 1949 when, recovering from a nervous breakdown in Dublin, he received a wire from Welles asking him to play in the film, to

March of 1950 when in Mogador, Welles remarked, "Mr. MacLiammóir, I am happy to tell you you are now an out-of-work actor. You have finished Iago." It is an even more attractive book than his earlier one. The form of the daily chronicle with its clipped style somewhat restrains the author's exuberant flow of words while it at the same time allows a sharper focus, and deprives the reader of none of his very real abilities as a critical observer. Sensitive, intellectually curious, tasteful, a remarkable linguist, at home anywhere but content only in Ireland, MacLiammóir has a sharp eye which catches not only the kaleidoscope of his travels, the places where he stayed, the color and the life, but the appearance and personalities of the people he encountered and what they said and did. The eye too turns inward to record modestly his own reactions, which are not limited to matters of his profession. There is no doubt that he is an interesting person, worth knowing, worth listening to. The book is at its best when considered as autobiography and as such it stands squarely on its own feet.

Both titles are, however, somewhat misleading. *Put Money in Thy Purse* is accurate only in its indication of the financial background of the film and the several interruptions in the making of it as money ran out; and the subtitle is relevant mostly in that it marks the period of events, and the center around which the experiences revolved. Since, during this period, Welles and MacLiammóir spent considerably more time *not* making the film than they did making it, the book remains MacLiammóir's diary rather than the diary of *Othello*. "I am still wondering what all this cavorting through the air has to do with the art of the films," he writes, and the reader may well add, "or with Shakespeare." In fact the Iago sometimes wondered whether the picture was ever to be made; it was not indeed completed when one turns the last page. We get the actor's movements from Dublin to Paris, to Rome, Dublin again, Belfast, Cork, Casablanca, Marrakesh; back to Casablanca, Paris, Rome; Mogador, Safi, Venice, Bologna; then Paris, Rome, Dublin, Viterbo, etc., and many acute observations and reflections thereon and therefrom, but if one reads the book primarily to discover plan and details of the production, there is bound to be some disappointment. There are vignettes of Welles, Hilton Edwards (Brabantio), Fay Compton (Emilia), and of a number of Desdemonas (the final one, Suzanne Cloutier), but the book would have been just as interesting with another occasion for it. One can of course glean somewhat.

A few facts, first, not connected with the book. *Othello* has been filmed several times, silently at least as early as 1908, possibly in 1902, and in Italy, Denmark, the United States, and Germany, the last with Emil Jannings as the Moor. Not counting excerpts or a condensed "educational" version, Welles's is the first *Othello* with accompanying sound and is his second Shakespeare film. The *Macbeth* of 1948 was not well received in this country, though it met with critical acclaim abroad. *Othello* was scheduled for screening at the Venice Film Festival of 1951 but was withdrawn from the competition at the last moment on the ground that the only available print had been hurriedly made and was not satisfactory. In May, 1952 it was, with Castellan's *Duo Soldi Di Speranza*, co-winner of the Grand Prix at the Film Festival at Cannes. At present writing it has not been released in the United States. It would be absurd to judge it without seeing it, though its success at Cannes makes it worthy of initial respect.

Nevertheless, a reading of MacLiammóir's book not only makes one wonder but raises doubts. It is not only the enormous waste of time and money that was involved in the production, for the film may not reflect the extravagance; nor the perhaps needless searches for the many locations in Morocco and Italy, which conceivably may make for effective settings. Setting is not vastly

important in the play, but film is a different art from the drama, and visual backgrounds become more necessary both as frame and as atmosphere. Moreover there is no reason why we should not see Desdemona's marriage, nor why the murder of Roderigo should not occur in a Turkish bath, though this latter transposition was occasioned by the failure of the costumes to arrive and the availability of bath towels in Mogador. (Did the suggestion come from *Les Enfants du Paradis*?) After all, Shakespeare was thinking of the platform stage rather more than of a street.

But the principal problem of making a Shakespeare film is to make it both good Shakespeare and good film, an interpretation of Shakespeare's meaning and spirit in terms of cinema aesthetic. Here I sometimes feel "admiration" in the Latin and Elizabethan rather than the modern sense. The keystone of Iago's "hatred of life" and "secret malady" is in the film to be that he is sexually impotent. Emilia is a "trollop," Bianca "a nice, good girl." Roderigo is to have a dog which appears in innumerable scenes. Animals are dangerous in motion pictures; they have a tendency to steal the show, even "repellent" lap-dogs. Seagulls become actors in the Iago-Cassio-Bianca scene, which was shot on a beach. If "the air was thick with white fluttering wings," what happens to the deviltry—and the tragedy? And should the reception of Lodovico be a "sumptuous spectacle in pavilion of silks and tapestries?" The torture of Iago in a cage becomes a visible fact; so, says MacLiammóir, "[I] am hauled up on a dangerously squeaking chain to an immense height by a tower over the sea to have my eyes plucked out by crows, yelling insults as I go. Felt much more inclined to yell 'Help, help!' but refrained. . . ." The question is whether Welles's "invention" results in a fresh interpretation of Shakespeare or only a desperate originality foreign to what Shakespeare intended to be the final effect of his play. In the production of a film, transposition, cutting, intercalation are inevitable and proper but intuition and idiosyncrasies are highly questionable guides in the interpretation of dramatic purpose and playwright's text.

In all fairness, one must wait and see. Meanwhile I commend if not so much the account of a film, Mr. MacLiammóir's mischievously witty, lively, and altogether captivating diary.

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Textual Problems of the First Folio. By ALICE WALKER. Cambridge University Press, 1953. Pp. viii + 170. \$3.75.

This volume is the seventh in the *Shakespeare Problems Series* under the general editorship of J. Dover Wilson. In many respects, Dr. Walker's book is the most important study in this distinguished series. Editors, textual scholars, and bibliographers will find it an exciting book, for Dr. Walker opens up a new and hitherto curiously overlooked subject for investigation. It is disturbing to recall that except for Willoughby's pioneering monograph and a few isolated studies of individual plays, the compositors in Jaggard's shop have been so completely neglected. It is to the work of these men that we owe our only authoritative texts of seventeen of Shakespeare's plays; of eighteen others, the First Folio texts have varying degrees of authority dependent on the nature of the copy from which these compositors worked. In the transmission of the texts, only *Pericles* escaped their attention, and for this unexplained lapse Jaggard's compositors were certainly not to blame. Dr. Walker presents,

with results that can leave no doubt as to the importance of this kind of investigation, the first detailed study of their work.

After an introductory chapter in which she describes the characteristics of Folio Compositors A and B, Dr. Walker turns to an analysis of six texts, each of which, she believes, was set up directly from a quarto that had been collated and corrected with reference to a manuscript. These plays are *Richard III*, *King Lear*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *2 Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. It is at present generally held that quartos of the first three, having been brought into some degree of conformity with the theater manuscripts, served as copy for F. This view has been established by Patrick's thorough study of the texts of *Richard III*, Greg's now classic monograph on Q1 *Lear* in which he presents evidence showing that F reproduces readings from uncorrected formes of the 1608 quarto, Duthie's recent critical edition of *Lear*, and Alexander's article on *Troilus and Cressida* which my own work corroborated. Sir Edmund Chambers lent his support to each of these conclusions. On the other hand, it is now generally believed that the F texts of *2 Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* are independent of the quartos that preceded them. To maintain that the F text of *Hamlet* is derivative from Q2 has against it the weight of the combined verdicts of Greg, Chambers, and Wilson; that *Othello* is dependent on the 1622 quarto has never, I believe, been seriously maintained; and of the relationship between the Q and F texts of *2 Henry IV*, Professor Shaaber, editor of the *Variorum* edition (1940), wrote:

Finally, I may add that the close comparison made by an editor who works more than five years on a text does not bear out the idea that F derives from Q. If F was printed from Q, or from a copy of the latter perfected and corrected by reference to some authentic MS., one would expect to find many small similarities of spelling, punctuation, and typographical style, such as those which prove, e.g. that the F text of *1 Henry IV* was printed from Q5 of that play. Actually no convincing similarities of this kind can be found: in orthography, punctuation, and typographical peculiarities the two texts diverge almost as often as they conceivably could. In consequence, one cannot think that the compositors who, in setting up *1 Henry IV*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and other plays from Q copies, followed their originals closely enough to make the indebtedness quite plain would now have departed from their copy in every insignificant way open to them. (P. 511)

It can now be stated with certainty that the F text of *2 Henry IV* is dependent on Q; but as Fredson Bowers has shrewdly conjectured (*Studies in Shakespeare*, The University of Miami Press, 1952, pp. 25-26), neither Professor Shaaber nor Dr. Walker is wholly correct. That is, the F text of *2 Henry IV* was indeed set from manuscript, but this manuscript was dependent on Q. Only by postulating this transcript can the evidence that Professor Shaaber produces for independence be reconciled with the equally convincing evidence that Dr. Walker presents for the dependence of the two texts.

About *Hamlet* there can be little doubt. Preliminary investigation (which I expect Mr. Oliver Steele's study now in progress will confirm) indicates that, as Dr. Walker maintains, the F text is dependent on Q2 (which, to complicate matters further, is demonstrably dependent on the corrupt first quarto of 1603). Again the evidence leads to the conclusion that the F text was not printed directly from a copy of Q2.

Dr. Walker's demonstration that the F text of *Othello* is dependent on Q is classic in its simplicity and force. With evidence that takes less than a page

to present, she proves beyond any possible doubt the relationship of the two texts. But again, it seems probable that a transcript intervenes between Q and F.

It is with the three plays (*Richard III*, *Lear*, and *Troilus*) that share many or all of the characteristics of *2 Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* that I am particularly concerned. In spite of the now generally accepted belief that *Lear* was set directly from a corrected copy of Q1, I feel that newly discovered evidence may require a modification of this view. My reasons for thinking so appear elsewhere in this issue. If the theory that I there present is accepted, it will be necessary to review the whole question of copy for the First Folio. If the six plays that Dr. Walker discusses, all manifestly dependent on the quartos, were not set directly from corrected quartos but from transcripts of them, a coherent theory should be adducible to explain the phenomenon. For *Lear* and *2 Henry IV*, the explanation may be nothing more than the difficulty of annotating a copy of the quarto, or perhaps the unsatisfactory printer's copy that such an annotated quarto would make; but other possibilities are suggested. It seems possible, for example, that Shakespeare's company may have used corrected quartos as prompt-books to a hitherto unsuspected extent. If such a practice prevailed, one can readily envisage a transcript of a quarto so corrected being the readiest copy for F. The problems raised are complex ones, and much work will be necessary before the answers are forthcoming.

Dr. Walker's book will force textual scholars to re-examine many of their basic assumptions. With some of her own assumptions I heartily disagree; as to others, the questions have been raised and only further investigation can supply the answers. I do not think, for example, that she proves her contention that the 1622 quarto of *Othello* is, in the Pollard sense, a "bad" quarto; nor am I at all convinced by her reconstruction of how the manuscript behind Q1 of *Lear* was produced. To postulate, as she does, a boy actor surreptitiously half-reading, half-reciting the play to a scribe seems less satisfactory than Duthie's memorial reconstruction by the company. On the other hand, Duthie's hypothesis is far from satisfactory: parts of Q1 are very good and suggest strongly Shakespeare's foul papers. About the speed with which the compositors worked and the effects of hurried composition, I think Dr. Walker is wrong. To suggest that the more pressed the compositors were for time "the more closely they followed . . . the quarto spelling" (p. 9) seems to me to be a mistake. A rushed compositor would surely attempt to carry larger sections of text in his head, and hence the copy would exert less instead of greater influence on what he set. Nor do I see how the compositors could have been hurried for an entire play; what may have happened is that sometimes the pressman gave a hurry-up signal as he approached the end of a run. In such a situation one would expect to find sloppy composition (perhaps evidenced by an abundance of literals) near the end of the forme. Professor Hinman's collation of the Folger folios will, one hopes, supply evidence on this point.

Some of the spelling characteristics of Folio Compositors A and B that Dr. Walker presents will, I suspect, have to be modified when more thorough studies of their work have been made. I do not think that her *young* for Compositor A and *yong* for Compositor B holds up, nor do I think that the use of final *ie* for *y* has been sufficiently considered. Dr. Walker is on much firmer ground in her observations on purely typographical matters: Compositor B was much more concerned with producing a trim type-page than was A; his centering of stage directions and his setting exits flush in the right margin confirm this observation. And Compositor A was, as Dr. Walker observes, much more conservative in his treatment of copy than was B; he tended to

follow his copy with a literalness that B unfortunately did not share. But, as Dr. Walker intimates, the identification of the Folio compositors is far from satisfactory; we need more precise and exacting criteria.

In spite of modifications that future investigations may force textual scholars to make, Dr. Walker's book will stand up as one of the few important textual studies of Shakespeare. It is an important book not only for the discoveries it contains, but also for the further work that it will force others to undertake. *Textual Problems of the First Folio* will, I believe, mark the beginning of a new and rewarding re-examination of the texts of Shakespeare.

PHILIP WILLIAMS

Duke University

A Complete Concordance or Verbal Index to Words, Phrases and Passages in the Dramatic Works of Shakespeare with a Supplemental Concordance to the Poems. By JOHN BARTLETT. New York: St Martin's Press, 1953. Pp. [viii] + 1910. \$22.50.

The virtues of this work are too well known to require comment. This is the seventh reprint since Macmillan issued the first edition in 1894. It is somewhat slimmer and lighter in weight than its predecessors, and thus is easier to handle. The gain has been effected, seemingly, by the use of cloth instead of buckram and of a light straw board in the covers. These may not prove durable. The book is well sewed, however; and the type is clear and without a blemish.

J.G.M.

The Folger Shakespeare Library

Queries and Notes

THE HOBBY HORSE IS FORGOT

WILLIAM RINGLER

The earliest recorded appearance of the phrase, "the hobby horse is forgot," perhaps a quotation from a popular song, is in *Love's Labour's Lost*, III. i. 30. Shakespeare played upon it again in *Hamlet*, III. ii. 143, and his editors and the *OED* have cited other uses of the phrase from the early seventeenth century. In order of time the second occurrence cited is in William Kemp's *Nine Daies Wonder* (1600), in which he tells of his Morris dance from London to Norwich in 1599. At one point he had to dance along a muddy road, and in describing his progress he broke into rhyme:

... I had the heaviest way that euer mad Morrice-dancer trod; yet,
With hey and ho, through thicke and thin,
The hobby horse quite forgotten,
I follow'd, as I did begin,
Although the way were rotten.¹

Another occurrence, apparently not noted by Shakespeare's editors, is in Song XX of Thomas Weelkes' *Ayeres or Phantasticke Spirites for three voices* (1608):

Since Roben Hood, maid Marian,
and little Iohn are gone a,
the hobby horse was quite forgot,
when Kemp did daunce a lone a,
he did labour
after the tabor
for to dance
then into France,
he tooke paines
to skip it in hope of gaines
he will trip it on the toe,
diddle diddle diddle-doe.²

"The hobby horse is forgot" seems to contain a topical allusion; the association of the phrase with William Kemp suggests that it may possibly refer to some incident in the earlier Morris dancing career of Shakespeare's fellow actor.

Washington University

¹ Ed. Alexander Dyce (Camden Society, 140), p. 8; cited in *OED*.

² Sig. D2'. Repr., E. H. Fellowes, *English Madrigal Verse* (Oxford, 1920), p. 230, whose line divisions I have followed; E. F. Rimbault, *A Little Book of Songs and Ballads* (London, 1851), p. 136, gives a different division.

A SPANISH VERSION OF SONNET 71

EDUARDO SAN MARTIN

Inspired by the beauty of Sonnet 71, Señor Eduardo San Martín contributes the following translation into Spanish:

No te aflijas por mí cuando yo muera,
Y suene el doble en tono dolorido,
Anunciando que al cabo ya he partido
Del mundo en que el gusano prolifera.

Si estas líneas tu vista recorriera,
Sepulta al que trazólas en olvido,
Porque es mí amor de "leyes" tan subido,
Que ensombrecer tu frente no quisiera.

Si estos versos alumbra tu mirada
Cuando al polvo me encuentre incorporado,
No repitas mi nombre acongojada;

Cese tu amor con la postrer palada:
No sea que el mundo, de saber sobrado,
Te burle por mi vida liquidada.

[It will be noted that the translator abandons the Shakespearian form of the sonnet with its three quatrains and concluding couplet and uses two quatrains and two tercets. It is a pleasure to receive this contribution from a lover of Shakespeare in a sister republic.]

Puebla, Pue., Mexico

Notes and Comments

THE FRONTISPICE

The detail from the painting by an unknown artist of the wedding feast of Sir Henry Unton, 1557 (?)—1596, shows masquers, a group of madrigal singers, and musicians playing the violin, flute, lute, cittern, bass viol, and pandora. The original hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in London.

—o—

MODEL OF TRINITY HALL THEATRE, 1557-1568

In the London Guildhall Library, Professor Charles Tyler Prouty of Yale discovered last year the records of the rental of Trinity Hall during the years 1557 to 1568 by actors for the performance of plays. Trinity Hall was located in the Parish of St. Botolph-without-Aldersgate, London. A contemporary sketch by one John Carter supplied information by which Mr. Klaus Holm, assistant in scenic design at Yale, was able to construct a scale model. The photograph facing page 461 shows how a scene from *Cambyses* might have been presented. There is space for an upper as well as a lower stage, and an area which might be curtained off as an inner stage. This room, Professor Prouty found, was hired by "dyuvere players" nearly a decade earlier than the construction of the first public playhouse, the Theatre, in 1576. It may represent a transitional stage in theatrical architecture, somewhere between the inn yard and the Theatre. After the model was unveiled by Professor Prouty on 24 April, it remained on exhibit in the Yale Library until September, when it was removed to become a part of the collection of theater models in the Brander Matthews Museum at Columbia University.

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SHAKESPEARE FOLIOS AT CORNELL

A set of the four Shakespeare folios was given to the Cornell University Library in June by Mr. William Gerhard Mennen, of Morristown, N. J., Cornell '08. The First Folio is a good copy—excellent except for the title and the Jonson verses facing, both in photographic facsimile. A few other preliminary and end leaves have had minor damage repaired most skilfully. The other three folios are also good—all above average. The Second has the imprint which Todd ("The Issues and States of the Second Folio . . .," *Studies in Bibliography* V, Charlottesville, 1952) designates Ib. The Third has the common 1664 title and the apocryphal additions. Nothing is known of the provenance except the name of the New York bookseller from whom the donor bought them several years ago. Cornell is to be congratulated on receiving such a handsome gift, Mr. Mennen on making such a wise and generous disposition of the treasure, placing it in an important library where it will be of real practical value for generations of students.

G. E. D.

SHAKESPEARE AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

A bulletin has been published by Brown University to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Sock and Buskin, whose first dramatic season was 1901-1902. Since 1921, Sock and Buskin keys have been awarded to a limited number of Juniors and Seniors who have demonstrated marked ability in some field of dramatic work. The President is Professor Ben W. Brown; Professor William T. Hastings, Chairman of the Advisory Board of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, is Chairman of the University Committee on Dramatic Productions.

During its half-century of activity, Sock and Buskin has presented some two hundred and eighty-five plays, skits, and farces. Along with popular offerings like *Charley's Aunt*, there have been plays by Molière, Shaw, Galsworthy, and Dunsany, as well as several Greek and Latin classics. Twenty-four times Sock and Buskin has turned to Shakespeare. It is not surprising that *Romeo and Juliet* has been the favorite, with three performances. There have been two productions each of *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard III*, and *Macbeth*—that in 1928-1929 is believed to be the first performance of the tragedy in modern dress. It is gratifying to note that there have also been performances of *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well*, and *A Comedy of Errors*. The season of 1946-1947 may be called the Shakespearian high point, when four plays were presented.

Congratulation are extended to Sock and Buskin, and good wishes for its next fifty years.



BACK NUMBERS OF SHAKESPEARE QUARTERLY

Once more an earnest appeal is made for back numbers of *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Few things cause greater anguish to a librarian or worse frustration to a reader than an incomplete or broken run of a periodical. Every month, some new library joins the Shakespeare Association of America and orders all the back numbers of the *Quarterly*. These orders are filled as long as the supply lasts. But already several issues are out of print. Copies of all back issues are desired, and Volume I, Number 1 (Jan. 1950), and Volume III, Number 1 (Jan. 1952), are urgently needed. If you have back issues that can be spared, you can render a splendid service to scholarship by mailing them to the Treasurer, Mr. John Fleming, 322 East 57th Street, New York City, or by writing him about what you can make available.

Contributors

Professor ROBERT H. BALL, of Queens College, specializes in the history of film versions of Shakespeare.

Founder and editor of *Studies in Bibliography*, Professor FREDSON T. BOWERS is the author of numerous books and articles in the Elizabethan field.

Professor OSCAR JAMES CAMPBELL, a member of the Advisory Board of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, continues to be so indispensable that Columbia University does not permit him to retire.

ANDREW J. GREEN, of Drake University, has been a contributor to many of the learned journals.

Professor HUBERT HEFFNER is head of the Department of Speech and Drama at Stanford University.

H. CARRINGTON LANCASTER, Professor Emeritus of Romance Languages at Johns Hopkins University, and long-time editor of *Modern Language Notes*, has long had an active interest in the literature of Shakespeare in France.

A member of the English Staff at Durham University, CLIFFORD LEECH has also been closely connected with Shakespeare studies in Stratford-upon-Avon.

THOMAS MARC PARROTT, Professor Emeritus of Princeton and member of the Advisory Board of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, scarcely needs introduction.

Author of many articles in the learned journals, Professor WILLIAM RINGLER, of Washington University, St. Louis, has in preparation an edition of the poems of Sir Philip Sidney.

Miss BOBBYANN ROESEN, a Senior at Bryn Mawr, is the first undergraduate to contribute an essay to *Shakespeare Quarterly*. She attended the Shakespeare Institute at Stratford-upon-Avon in the summer of 1952 and hopes to pursue graduate studies in Renaissance literature at Oxford or Cambridge.

Miss SYBIL ROSENFIELD, editor and author, is Joint Hon. Secretary of the Society for Theatre Research and Joint Editor of *Theatre Notebook*.

Senior EDUARDO SAN MARTIN, of Puebla, Pue., Mexico, is the first, but we hope not the last, contributor from his country.

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Another contributor and member of the Advisory Board of *Shakespeare Quarterly* who needs no introduction is ELMER EDGAR STOLL, Professor Emeritus of the University of Minnesota.

Professor PHILIP WILLIAMS, of Duke University, appears in this issue as author and reviewer, his article being an outgrowth of the review.

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